THE VICTORIOUS LIFE

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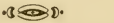

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BV 4501 .W4 1896
Webb-Peploe, H. W. 1837-
1923.
The victorious life

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BROOKLYN, N. Y.

THE VICTORIOUS LIFE

By Prebendary Webb-Peploe

THE LIFE OF PRIVILEGE; OR, POSSESSION, PEACE, AND POWER, being the Report of Addresses delivered at the Northfield Bible Conference, 1895. 12mo, cloth, $1.00.

THE VICTORIOUS LIFE, the Post-Conference Addresses delivered at East Northfield, Mass., August, 1895. 12mo, cloth, $1.25.

THE BAKER & TAYLOR CO.

5 & 7 East Sixteenth Street

NEW YORK

SEP 2 1
THEOLOGICAL

THE VICTORIOUS LIFE

THE POST-CONFERENCE ADDRESSES

DELIVERED AT EAST NORTHFIELD, MASS., AUGUST 17–25, 1895

BY

REV. H. W. WEBB-PEPLOE

PREBENDARY OF ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, LONDON

EDITED BY

DELAVAN L. PIERSON

καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ νίκη ἡ νικήσασα τὸν κόσμον, ἡ πίστις ἡμῶν.—I. John v. 4.

τῷ δὲ Θεῷ χάρις τῷ διδόντι ἡμὶν τὸ νῖκος διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.—I. Cor. xv. 57.

NEW YORK

THE BAKER & TAYLOR CO.

5 AND 7 EAST 16TH STREET

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PRINTED BY
THE CAXTON PRESS
NEW YORK, U. S. A.

INTRODUCTION.

The visit of Rev. Prebendary H. W. Webb-Peploe to this country, in the summer of 1895, is an event not likely to be forgotten by any of those who shared the privilege of hearing him, or even of reading the careful reports of his addresses preserved in the "Northfield Echoes."

Prebendary Webb-Peploe is well known in Great Britain as the head of the Evangelical or Low Church party in the Anglican Church, and one of the chief promoters of the Keswick movement, which has been so closely associated with the advance of spiritual life as to come to represent almost a new era of practical religious thought and experience. As was remarked by one of the English visitors at the Northfield Conference, last summer, "there is no need of any one's going to Keswick who was at Northfield in August last; for the cream of Keswick teaching was to be found there."

This remarkable man, Prebendary Webb-Peploe, is yet living, and words which might be fitting to utter of the dead, lack delicacy and propriety, when they anticipate such departure

for the higher sphere. But it is no fulsome compliment to say that God has given him a very remarkable and unusual combination of elements, which together constitute the teaching faculty. The Bible is his great text-book, and of that book he is as thorough a master as any man living. His long and laborious studies of the Word of God, joined to a peculiarly keen and subtle power of analysis, and a really phenomenal memory, enable him to outline a whole book and cite chapter and verse in rapid succession, as he traces the development of a doctrinal or practical truth from Genesis to Revelation.

But best of all, his teachings are illustrated and illuminated by an *experience* which gives unique authority and unction to his utterance. There is that nameless charm which always invests the speech of one who speaks what he knows and testifies what he has seen. There is also a personal practical *grip* to his teaching. It takes hold and will not let go. It seems so reasonable, Scriptural, resistless, that the hearer feels himself as in a vise. The will cannot easily escape vital decisions. Unbelief is rebuked and made to seem both too wrong and too absurd to be longer cherished.

A book lacks the strange aroma of a personal presence; and it may seem almost vain to attempt to reproduce on the printed page the

charm of a rapidly spoken, cumulative, urgent, magnetic address. But these addresses have been edited with consummate care, so that they may be adapted to the printed page, and they retain so much of their original power that they will be found replete with suggestion, original thought, convincing argument, pertinent illustration, and all the best qualities of the most helpful and stimulating reading on these grand themes. We risk nothing in adding that no man or woman who devoutly reads them will ever consent to part with the volume that contains them, except with the purpose of scattering the seed which promises such a harvest in holy lives and consecrated character.

ARTHUR T. PIERSON,

1127 Dean Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

DECEMBER, 1895.

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EXPLANATORY NOTE.

It is only due to Prebendary Webb-Peploe to say that he has been unable to correct the reports of any of the addresses which appear in this volume with the exception of that on "The Spirit and the Believer," therefore any mistakes which may have crept into this volume should not be charged to his account.

Owing to the tardy decision to report and publish these addresses, three of them were not taken down by our stenographer. "The Second Coming of our Lord" and "What God Hath Cleansed," are taken from a long-hand report by the editor, and "The Prepared Messenger" was compiled from very meager notes taken by various other persons. This will explain the comparative lack of fullness in the reports of these three addresses.

D. L. P.

THE VICTORIOUS LIFE.

THE SPIRIT AND THE BELIEVER.

"Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit" or, as the Greek has it, "in Spirit."—*Eph. v. 17, 18.*

As the declarations or revelations of God are to be accepted with implicit faith, when they tell us of a salvation infinitely beyond anything we could have expected or hoped for; so the commands of God are to be received with implicit faith, when they bid us do things far beyond anything we could expect to see carried out in ourselves. True faith bows before the Word of God; for that word can only convey Divine facts or principles concerning the salvation accomplished for us. We do wisely to lay our heads in the dust; or we may be tempted to say that the thing revealed is impossible for us, because it is beyond what we could have expected to be true. When, therefore, God lays upon us a command, we should say at once, "It must be true and possible;" though by nature we may be inclined to think, "It is impossible; and

could never be carried out in such a creature as I am." Exactly as we say to a poor helpless inquiring soul "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and that life is in his Son. . . . He that believeth not God hath made him a liar;" so, when we come to a command that has relation to our progress in spiritual life, we ought to remember that the record is the word that God hath spoken to us; that it is for us to accept it as his command to us individually; that it must be possible for God to carry it out in the creature; and that by disbelief we make God a liar.

To the child of God, yearning for holiness, there is something exceedingly precious and delightful in approaching a command that seems to be naturally impossible; because he realizes that the Lord gave the word, and that it is for the Lord to make possible of fulfillment in his child that which he commands. For surely we can say with Augustine, "Give what Thou commandest, then command what Thou wilt." Yea, let God command what he will; it must be carried out; only on one condition—that we be "willing in the day of his power."

As we approach this intensely solemn command: "Be filled with the Spirit," there is not one of us who would not feel it to be almost blasphemous for such words to be expressed by mortal man, were it not that they came by inspi-

ration of the Holy Ghost; and that the man who wrote them was empowered by the Spirit to hand such words down to the whole Church of God. Therefore, it cannot be an impossibility or God would never have uttered the commandment. It rests upon the creature to see that, according to God's plan of fulfilment, it shall be carried out in him; and that he shall not thwart or hinder the will of God by unbelief, or by any continuance in that which is evil. It is an exceedingly solemn thing to take up such a command, and to believe that what hitherto seemed so absolutely beyond our reach is intended by God for us all; for while we hear again and again of aspirations after the blessings that would come from being filled with the Spirit, very few of God's children seem to believe that the fault is in themselves if it is not realized; or that the hindrance cannot lie with God, but must lie with us, if his will is not completely carried out. With regard to all such commands, the full and final accomplishment of them must wait for the day when our bodies shall be fashioned like the body of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ; because our body, being still subject to corruption, cannot receive into the corrupt parts that Spirit of God which is everlasting life, and which knows no taint of corruption.

The question for us is this:—How near to the accomplishment of God's will is it possible for

the believer to come in the life that now is, while waiting for the full and absolute perfection of accomplishment at the day of the Lord's appearing? The great grief and shame that lie upon the Church is that as a whole she is willing to remain so far away from God's holy purpose. For instance, Christ says, "Be ye perfect," or, "Ye shall be perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect;" and the majority of Christians say that because there is no experimental perfection to be had in this world, therefore they will not make an essay to see how nearly they can reach perfection in this life. Dogmatic theology says that the Holy Ghost cannot pervade that which is corrupt, therefore the majority seem to think they may be content to live a life very, very far below that spiritual life traced in God's Holy Word.

We are desirous of ascertaining how near to this glorious conformity to the Lord Jesus Christ we may attain by simple acceptance of God's purpose for our lives, and how near we may come in this world of sin to knowing even as we are known by the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, as we approach the solemn subject, my first charge is:—*Hinder not the will of God by a spirit of unbelief;* by limiting the Holy One of Israel; because you thereby reject his holy counsel and purpose for you. Train your souls in a spirit of receptivity, and by the exercise of faith, to take all that God himself can give. Be deter-

mined that "your whole spirit, soul and body"—whatever department of your being you can deal with—shall be placed submissively at the disposal of God, to know, to receive, and to enjoy, everything that God can possibly give you, while you are, alas, in the body of corruption.

There are many differences of opinion as to how far we can be filled with the Spirit; as to the means by which this fullness is to be secured; as to what will be the signs of being filled; and what are the hindrances in ourselves, to our yielding ample and implicit obedience to the commandment of the Lord. I shall therefore divide my subject into three special branches, which I would entitle:—

I. The *Universal Endowment* with the Holy Ghost, which God has bestowed upon the Church and the world.

II. The *Individual Enduement* with God the Holy Ghost, which takes place with regard to every soul when it is brought into the knowledge of its acceptance in Christ Jesus, and is made alive unto God through Him.

III. The *Personal Enjoyment* which may be known by the saint as he progresses, or accepts continually more and more of the gift that God has bestowed upon him.

We ought not to feel that we are entering upon controversy or hurting one another's feelings, because terms are used that slightly differ

from those which our brethren might employ. We are all equally interested in discovering the truth, and I desire to set forth exactly what the Word of God says.

I. Look, first, at THE UNIVERSAL ENDOWMENT with God the Holy Ghost as a *gift.* God's Word makes it clear that there has been bestowed once for all the gift by God of the Holy Ghost *as a person;* and it would be as inconceivable that we should ask God to send his Son to be born again in the flesh, and to pass again through the great work of our redemption, as it is for us (reasonably and theologically and Biblically) to ask God to give again the gift of the Holy Ghost, which he has once for all bestowed. But this will not prevent a constant repetition of earnest prayer for the experience described in Luke xi. 13: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give Holy Spirit to them that ask him!" There is no article "the" in that passage; the word is partitive, not personal; it is "Holy Spirit." There is no doubt that none of us have realized the fullness of the possibilities that might be expected concerning the gift, or powers, or qualities of this "Holy Ghost;" and that the holiest will always be conscious of needing more. It is one thing for me to ask God to give me more of the Spirit in my own per-

sonal enjoyment; it is another thing to ask God to give his own perfect gift again from heaven, as though he never had bestowed it. It is one thing to recognize that I have failed to take and to use what my Father has bestowed; it is another thing to charge my Father with not having bestowed what he says he has given.

God's word tells us plainly that the Holy Ghost is already given as the universal income of the Church. He is called "the earnest of our inheritance." We shall know the full extent of our inheritance when we see Jesus as he is, but meanwhile the Holy Ghost is described as "the earnest." A man may possess a splendid income and yet may never have seen his magnificent property. What we enjoy of our income is the measure of holiness which we really possess and exhibit in this life. Holiness may be said to be the expenditure of income received through God's gift of the Holy Spirit. Hereafter the inheritance will be ours in its fullness; then we shall know as we are known.

In order to be assured that there has been an actual bestowment, once for all, of the Person of God "The Holy Ghost," as distinguished from his qualities, turn to God's Word, and judge ye what is said! Look first into the Old Testament Scriptures, and see the nature of the promises concerning the Spirit. Jesus bids his disciples look for the Holy Ghost as "the promise of the

Father." What is the nature of that promise? —First there is the thought in Psalm lxviii. 18, that the Lord Jesus Christ ascending on high, led captivity captive, to "*receive gifts for men.*" If we turn to St. Paul's declaration of the fulfillment in Ephesians iv. 8, we find that he changes the words to read: "He led captivity captive and *gave gifts unto men.*" In the former case it was "received gifts for men;" in the latter case, after Pentecost, he "gave gifts unto men." Therefore, clearly, *that* promise or prophecy has been fulfilled.

With regard to the promises which distinctively mark God's intention to give the Holy Ghost, turn to Isaiah xliv. 3: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed and my blessings upon thine offspring." Again in Isaiah xxxii. 15, the prophet said that full blessings could not come upon the land "until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high." Again God, by the mouth of the prophet Ezekiel, says: "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments" (Ezekiel xxxvi. 27). "I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God" (Ezekiel xxxix. 26). And later on in the same prophecy: It is a solemn question when these words shall have received their fulfillment. Turn next to Zacha-

riah xii. 10, and read: "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced." I cannot deal fully with these texts, but simply point them out that you may study them and judge for yourselves to what particular period of history they refer.

We now come to the great passage in Joel ii. 28, 29, which must always be considered the special promise for this dispensation: "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit." I have noted several texts that speak of God's "pouring out" of his Spirit, and this one is the key text to the whole, because in Acts ii. 16 the apostle Peter makes use of a most remarkable expression, as far as I know, found nowhere else in the Bible, with regard to the fulfillment of a prophecy. He says: "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." In every other case in the New Testament you read, "That it might be fulfilled" (showing that it is an application); or "as the prophet has said" (showing that the writer takes up the prophet's words). But here Peter says: "*This is that which was spoken by Joel.*"

I have three great authorities for my interpretation of these words. Dr. Pusey, a very eminent theologian, says in his "Commentary on the Minor Prophets": "Concerning this promise of the Spirit, God says, I will pour out, *i. e.*, give largely; as though he would empty out him who is Infinite, so that there should be no measure of his giving, save our capacity for receiving." Rev. H. C. G. Moule, who is likewise considered no mean authority, says in his "Outlines of Christian Doctrine" (p. 127): "As the Messianic Age approaches, the prophecies indicate a coming universal 'effusion' of the Spirit ('upon *all flesh*,' Joel ii. 28). The universality seems to refer to an extension to all races and ranks of men. The New Testament (Acts ii. 16–21) finds this fulfilled at Pentecost, when representatives of the race received the Gospel, and the universal believing Church definitely began to be under the power of the Spirit. True, that beginning has a future in which all the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord (Psalm xxii. 27). Limits upon the work of grace at one period are no proof that it will be always limited; but the passages here in question indicate not so much a work in every individual, as a world-wide extension of the Spirit's full action upon individuals, resulting in union with Christ in his Church universal."

Dr. Wordsworth says that the pouring of the

Spirit "upon all flesh" received its fulfillment in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, because the Word was made flesh; and that now this blessing is to be poured through him upon us; so, as he received the fullness of the Spirit, the fullness of the Spirit was poured down on him, and through him upon all flesh that would take it.

With these three great authorities before us we can have no hesitation, I think, in understanding that the term "upon all flesh" does not mean upon each individual man, but is to be taken generically and that the coming down or descent of the Holy Ghost was to be on human flesh as a whole. The question is then: Has this promise ever received any distinct fulfillment?

The Lord Jesus, before he passed away, spoke in John xiv., of sending *a Person*, Whom my Father will send in my name" (ver. 26); and "Whom I will send" "(xv. 26). In Acts ii., where we find the declaration that the prophecy has been fulfilled, the apostle Peter, quoting the prophecy, says (ver. 17):—"It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will *pour out* of my Spirit on all flesh." In ver. 33 he uses the same word in the Greek:—"Being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he *hath poured out* this which ye now

see and hear." So that, according to these prophecies, according to the promise of the Lord Jesus, and according to the declaration of Peter, we should say that there has been once for all a historical fulfillment in the Advent of the Holy Ghost as a Person, exactly as there was in the Advent of the Word made flesh when Jesus Christ came down from heaven to earth. Such an advent we all would acknowledge to have taken place on that solemn day of Pentecost on which Peter speaks. Can the Spirit then be said to be constantly "descending" or "being poured out," as on Pentecost day?

There are special terms used concerning the advent of the Holy Ghost as person. When Jesus Christ came, John the Baptist spoke of him as one who should do all his work in the power of the Holy Ghost; and in connection with our Lord's baptism we notice some remarkable facts. In Matt. iii. 16 we read that, as Jesus came out of the water, "the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God *descending* like a dove *and lighting upon Him.* Mark these two terms. First there is the *universal endowment* of Christ as the Second Adam by the descent of the Holy Ghost from heaven at his baptism. Then there is the *individual enduement* of the Master as the "Son of Man" by the Holy Ghost lighting upon (or coming upon) him, so that the Spirit claimed him for

his own (see the same thoughts expressed in John i. 33). Thus we have an historical fulfillment in Christ at his baptism, when the Holy Ghost descended *and* lighted upon him; and then the historical fulfillment for the Church on the day of Pentecost with its glorious results.

In the fulfillment of the prophecy that the Spirit should be poured upon all flesh, there would appear to be three manifestations of the fact that the descent had taken place, by the use of the term "falling upon," which occurs only three times in the Acts. It is partitive in the sense that it comes upon three generic classes of men; but absolute in the sense that these three classes generically embrace all flesh. From Acts ii. we know how the Holy Ghost descended upon those who were called saints in Jerusalem, but here this term is not used. In chap. xi. 15 the Apostle says, concerning the Gentiles:—"The Holy Ghost *fell on them as on us* at the beginning." There is the historical declaration of the Holy Ghost having descended as a Person at Pentecost; and thus he "fell upon" the *Israelites:* for they were all Israelites who then knew the Lord, and were waiting for the fulfillment of the promise.

The next instance in the Acts is where the Spirit fell on the *Samaritans*, who were a half-breed race, a mixture of Israel with the Gentiles

as we know from II. Kings xvii. In Acts viii. we are told that Peter and John went down to Samaria: "Who, when they were come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost (for as yet he was fallen upon none of them). Then they laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost." He had *fallen upon* Israel, and now He *fell on* the Samaritans. In Acts x. 44, we have the record of his *falling on the Gentiles*, as already mentioned: "The Holy Ghost *fell on* all them which heard the word," *i. e.*, the centurion and his household.

Thus, we have these remarkable facts. First, the Holy Ghost descended upon the Lord Jesus as representative *Man*. Then Christ went back to heaven, and at Pentecost the Holy Ghost descended as a Person, and became the absolute gift of God to *men*. There is a generic fulfillment of God's promise upon the Israelite, the half-breed and the pure Gentile. Thus all mankind are included, and you find the Holy Ghost "poured out," and "descended" or "fallen upon" all flesh according to the promises contained in the Old Testament prophecy. This, as I understand it, is the historical fulfillment of God's blessed intention of Love and Grace, and is what I call "The universal endowment, or gift to man, of God *The* Holy Ghost."

Consider next, the INDIVIDUAL ENDUEMENT,

which is a totally distinct thing. The first fact is one in which God acts alone; man has no part in it whatever. In this second stage there is partly the work of God, and partly the work of man; a mixture of the objective and the subjective. And as I look for this individual enduement, what do I find? That when a man—any man, no matter who—is dealt with by God, the Spirit comes to work in him a process of the conviction of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (John xvi. 8). The moment a man receives the blessed truth that God was in Christ saving him, he receives regeneration; he is a saved soul, and is given a new life. At that moment there is in him, first, the old natural life which remains with us to the end of our existence, and secondly, the new Spirit life which God the Holy Ghost has bestowed. What has the man now received? Just this gift of God, the blessed gift of the Holy Ghost, and in him the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. The moment he takes these, he is endued with the Holy Spirit. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Therefore, all the Church are as one upon the simple fact that when we believe, we are partakers of the Holy Ghost. What some of us do not agree upon is the extent of the income that we now possess, or the extent to which we ought to enjoy God's absolute gift.

What has really happened to the regenerate?

St. Paul says, in Gal. iv. 6, "God *hath sent forth* the Spirit of his Son into your hearts crying, 'Abba, Father.'" "The babe's cry and the man's cry put together," as one old writer expresses it. Again, St. Paul says (II. Tim. i. 7), "God *hath given* to us the spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind." We have, moreover, as he says in Rom. viii. 15, "not received the spirit of bondage, but we *have received* the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry 'Abba, Father.'" As Christians, we are not "waiting for the promise"; but we *have received* the blessed Spirit of liberty and of power. It is ours as a gift from God, and the individual enduement has taken place, for the Holy Spirit has come upon us at the moment of our new birth.

Notice again, how it was with the Lord Jesus Christ. In Matt. iii. 16, we are told that the Holy Ghost descended *and lighted upon* him. Then he says to his disciples (Acts i. 8). "Ye shall receive power after the Holy Ghost *is come upon* you." Again (Acts xix. 6), "When Paul laid his hands upon them [the disciples at Ephesus] the Holy Ghost *came upon* them." This word "came upon" is a totally different word from that translated "descended." Christ received the Holy Ghost after he had descended. The Spirit descended first and *then* came upon Christ. So that while God *has* given the gift of

the Holy Ghost as a Person, there comes the partitive distribution on each individual soul who is made alive unto God. Each true believer has the Holy Ghost as his own spiritual income; but alas! he knows but little of Him yet.

I believe that I have noted every text in my Bible, where the Spirit is mentioned, and I find (though some differ with me) that, wherever *the Person* of the Holy Ghost is mentioned, you have the article "the," but wherever the qualities or gifts of the Spirit are put before us, the name is without the article. You will never find any man, not even the Lord Jesus Christ, who is *described* as being (I do not say that the Lord Jesus *was not;* I only say that we do not *read* of him being), *as a man*, full of the Person of the Holy Ghost, *i. e.*, where the article is used, which denotes the Person, and not quality.

In Luke iv. 1, this distinction is remarkably preserved: "Jesus, being full of (the) Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan, and was led by *the* Spirit." In the first part of the sentence there is no article; it is his subjective experience. In the second clause it is an objective fact, an historical truth—*the* Holy Ghost led him into the wilderness. Of course I do not here touch upon our Lord's divinity; I am simply speaking of him in his humanity, and as the Word of God speaks of him.

When we are born into the kingdom of God, he gives to each of us *the* Holy Ghost, but we cannot take him in; he is far beyond our capacity. Therefore, all that we enjoy is "Holy Ghost;" but that does not prove that we have not received, as a gift from God, our whole income. It is ours, but we are not "of full age," or sufficiently "perfect" (Heb. v. 4) to be able to enjoy our inheritance. God allows us to take and use what we can use properly, but we are such babes that we do not know how to use the income that he waits to give. The moment we are perfected, he will allow us to take all our possession. So there comes the question,—How much can we enjoy or spend of our income on earth? Certainly, there is room here for much self-reproach, and for wider and nobler aspirations for the future.

III. Having seen that the individual indwelling takes place at the new birth, we come now to consider the third part of the subject. There is a most solemn distinction between the general endowment, or the individual enduement, by God, with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and man's PERSONAL ENJOYMENT of the gift from the moment that he has received it.

We should, perhaps, best explain what it is to be "filled with the Spirit," if we ask ourselves what the Holy Ghost is meant to be to those who receive him at all from God. I may not stay to

speak much of his absolute personality as God. He is described as "the Spirit of the Father;" "the Spirit of the Son;" "the Spirit of God;" "the Spirit of Christ." But when we speak of his qualities, we find him described under many different terms—"the Spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind," "the Spirit of wisdom," and so on. In Isaiah xi. 2, 3, the Lord Jesus Christ is spoken of as having a sevenfold power of the Spirit upon him; and what he was to Christ as man, I humbly believe he is meant to be to us; that is to say, we ought to know him and use him, as the Lord Jesus did, up to the measure of the possibility in which faith can enable us to appropriate and enjoy our glorious possession.

There are no less than seven figures by which the Holy Ghost is described at different times in the Scriptures. First, he is compared to *water*. At the very outset of our spiritual career, we are buried by baptism into death; even as when mankind were buried by water under the flood. But as God put Noah and his family into the Ark, which is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, so we are not only buried in but "saved by water," when "by one Spirit (Greek: "*in* one Spirit") we are all baptized into one body." Again he is water, that he may be to us as a refreshing draught, to cheer us in the struggle and toil of daily life. He is spoken of also as *fire* to purify

and destroy whatever is evil in us; also to illuminate, invigorate and warm. He is *oil*, to soothe and comfort and to give us peace. He is *wind*, to permeate every part of our being by the searching and cleansing power of God. Then we come to a solemn thought. He is a *seal*, stamping us with the very image of God, and setting Christ's mark upon us, as he claims us for his own: for "we, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Again, he is "*wine* that maketh glad the heart of man." And lastly you read of him as the *dove*, but that apparently is not for us. It is a remarkable fact that nearly all the others are qualitative or partitive—what we call elements. But as the dove he came upon Christ alone as a living manifestation and embodiment of the Spirit in his work—He being the true representative Man, to whom for us the Spirit was given without measure (John iii. 34).

Now *we*, *as men*, *are called to be filled;* and, in order that we may be so filled, the question arises, what does the expression mean in this particular passage? There are two words used with regard to "filling." One is πλήρης, the adjective, and the verb akin to it, πληρόω which expresses the normal, or constant condition. But there is another word, πλησθεῖς, which signifies an abnormal or special condition,

and which also is frequently found in the Acts of the Apostles. The distinctive use of these several words should be most carefully noted in all the passages where they occur. I think that it is the idea conveyed by this latter word of which some men are thinking when they speak about the "baptism of the Spirit"; little recognizing that *that* expression is absolutely un-Biblical, as it never occurs once in the whole Bible.

There are five passages that speak of Christ doing his great work of baptism with regard to the Spirit. The first is Matthew iii. 11, and Mark i. 8, where John the Baptist in preaching uses the words: "He shall baptize you *in*"—not *with*—"Holy Ghost." In Luke iii. 16, there is the same expression: "In Holy Ghost and in fire." In John i. 33, we read again: "He shall baptize *in* Holy Ghost." Christ himself makes the promise once: "Ye shall be baptized *in* Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts i. 5). There are these five promises; but it is only once alluded to as a fact accomplished. This is very remarkable. We find it in Acts xi. 15, 16, where the Apostle Peter is describing the baptism "in Holy Ghost." In every one of these passages we observe that the word "in" is used, not "with." The great accomplishment of it is declared by Peter to have been at the day of Pentecost; there is a fulfill-

ment of it also in the case of the Gentiles, upon whom the Holy Ghost descended. So that when the Holy Ghost descended upon all flesh, the baptism of humanity generically took place. With regard to the individual, this should take place at his baptism. In his "Veni Creator" (p. 20), Mr. Moule says that baptism is the initial act by which a man is introduced into the Church, and therefore baptism with the Spirit, the same as baptism with water, must be an initial act. The moment the man commences to live, he is baptized in the Holy Ghost.

I humbly believe that there is no after-baptism in or by the Holy Ghost for any man from the moment he has become a child of God. He simply remains in the element into which he was introduced, and it is his own fault if he be not perpetually drinking in the heavenly element which now surrounds him. The Holy Ghost is to the soul what pure air is to the body. "Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it." At the same moment that spiritually he is baptized into the death of Christ, he is also quickened in or by the Spirit. That is what St. Paul says in I. Corinthians xii. 13: "By (or in) one Spirit we are all baptized into one body." He goes on to say: "And have all been made to drink (into) one Spirit." I seldom find these words spoken of at all. The Revised Version leaves out the word "into," and we read, "have all been made

to drink one Spirit." Whose fault is it if, as the beloved of the Bridegroom, we have refused to drink abundantly? (Canticles v. 1.) We read in I. Corinthians x., that the Israelites "were *all* baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." The *cloud* is the only figure describing the Holy Ghost that I did not mention among the seven, because it is more of a type than a figure. It represents the abiding presence of God. All Israel, whether spiritual or carnal, were baptized, because they were Israelites, into the cloud and into the sea. So St. Paul says to the carnal Corinthians: "Ye were *all* baptized into (or in) one Spirit, and are thus made into one body." Therefore this baptism in the Spirit is true for all believers, however carnal or babe-like they may be.

What then are we to expect if we cannot again be baptized by the Spirit, or with the Spirit, or even in the Spirit? The only real question now to be answered is: What can we do to be filled with (or in) the Spirit? Mark what St. Paul says to the Corinthians in his first Epistle, iii. 16, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" Again (vi. 19), "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, and which ye have of God; and ye are not your own? Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit which are his." Once again

(II. Cor. vi. 16), "God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

The Apostle states a fact in all these passages —that we are the temple of the Holy Ghost already, and have the Holy Ghost in us. I need not refer you to such texts as Rom. v. 5, "The love of God is shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Ghost which *is given* unto us;" or II. Cor. i. 22, where we read that God *hath given* unto us "the earnest of the Spirit, in our hearts," II. Cor. v. 5, "Who also *hath given* onto us the earnest of the Spirit," and many other texts, showing that we have received the Holy Ghost besides having been baptized into one body *in* one Spirit. "What then shall we do to be filled?" What did they do in the days of Hezekiah, when the Temple had had all kinds of iniquity and filth brought into it? The priests came and purged out all the filth that they found, and cast it into the brook Kidron. What did they do in Nehemiah's day, when Tobiah had filled God's chambers with household stuff? The prophet cast it all forth out of the Lord's house. What did the Lord Jesus do, when the temple was filled with money-changers and sellers of merchandise? He made a scourge of small cords and drove them all out.

That is the first step which must be taken by us. The moment it is taken I humbly believe

that the Holy Ghost will rush into our hearts as air does into a vacuum when opened; or as water into a vessel when placed under a fountain. Hezekiah and the others only cast out all that they found; and we can only cast out all the evil that we find. Therefore we are told to wait in prayer for the gift of the Spirit. I would rather say: Go down on your knees and say like David, "Search me, O God, try my heart, and see if there be any wicked way in me." It is not God who has not given; it is you who have not taken. You have filled the Temple of God with your household stuff, and have put the money changers and divers kinds of folly into the Father's house; therefore, you are not filled with the Holy Ghost. Let a man, let the Church, go down before God and say: "Search me, O God." When he has searched you, he will show you things you never knew. You can only get rid of what you find; and God gives no further than man can take; and man can take only what he knows. Let us go to God and tell him of all our sin and folly, and of the pride that has prevented us from confessing the evil things of which we knew.

We may all rise to the normal condition of the Christian if we are yielded to God; but if he wants some special service from us, he will show us that there is something wanting. Then it is that by the confession of our need, and by the

humble prayer of faith (as in the case of the disciples in Acts iv. 31, when they needed boldness in the hour of trial) we may find ourselves "filled" (πλησθέντες) in that department of our being in which we lacked the Spirit. This is the only form in which a sudden accession can be known, and it is obtained by discovery and confession of the fact that in that department of our being we have not yielded to God.

There is this difference between the old dispensation and the new. The Old Testament prophets were carried and "borne along" by the Spirit (II. Pet. i. 21). The Spirit was then rather acting *upon*, than *in*, those whom he used; and some people think that if they had the Spirit, they would be *driven or carried along* like the prophets of old. But he does not so deal with men to-day. We read in Rom. viii. 14: "As many as are *led* by the Spirit;" also in Gal. v. 18: God only leads by his Spirit that dwelleth in us; and He will lead us just so far as we are willing to go. He never drives now. The Gospel is not a driving dispensation; you must be willing to be led.

But what is to be the result of it all? Notice first at the *negative results of yielding to the Spirit.* Look at Gal. v. 16: "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." I do not believe that that passage is meant to be done away with by the Christian.

I have heard it said: "I pity St. Paul when he wrote that; he was in a low, grovelling experience." Nay, brethren, the lust of the flesh is in all men to the last. If a man says that he is delivered from the flesh, so that it has no longer any existence in his experience, he is contradicting God's Holy Word. The flesh is there, and what is the Christian to do? "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." The flesh is lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and you are between the two. The question is "To which are you going to yield?" Walk in the Spirit, because willingly led of the Spirit; and stay there all the days of your life; if you do, you will never fulfill the lust of the flesh.

But what are to be the *positive results?* In Gal. v. 22 we have the answer. Do not speak of the *fruits* of the Spirit; it is the *fruit* of the Spirit—nine grapes in one bunch. It is all of one Spirit who desires to work one and the same blessed fruit in us all. Here are nine beautiful grapes, and they all relate to character, rather than to conduct. Perhaps you are longing for splendid conduct; wanting to go and do some great works. God wants you to begin with character. The Holy Ghost works character; then he can fill you for service; and assuredly God wants all to be thus blessedly filled. It is no man's special prerogative, or gift, above his

fellows, to be filled in the Spirit. But remember that, while the world "resists the Holy Ghost," even a child of God may "grieve" and "quench" him.

"Fill the water-pots with water, and bear unto the governor of the feast." Such is the command of the Lord Jesus to his servants. God deals with you as "servants" to the end. The servants must fill the water-pots; and by God's grace take out everything that is not the pure water of the Spirit: and when you have borne out to the governor of the feast, he will say: "Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine, and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse; but thou hast kept the good wine until now." The water of God is meant to be poured out of these poor earthen and feeble vessels (John vii. 33), and to be turned to "wine that cheers the heart of man," even the blessed heavenly wine—not wine of earth. When the Lord sees that the water-pots are filled with water, he will begin to make use of us and to pour out of his riches all over the earth. The command of the Lord to each one of us is: "Be filled in the Spirit," and then "Yield yourselves unto God."

THE SECOND COMING OF OUR LORD.

"The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us and unto our children forever."—*Deuteronomy xxix. 29.*

THE study of prophecy is, therefore, profitable to us, especially since as St. Peter writes: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy whereunto ye do dwell that ye take heed; . . . knowing this first that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved (φερόμενοι, borne along) by the Holy Ghost" (II. Peter i. 19–21). Again he says: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently; . . . searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that is to follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you; . . . which things the angels desire to look into (I. Peter i. 10–12).

From these passages we learn that we have a more sure word of prophecy even than the voice heard upon the Mount, and that the prophets themselves studied to understand God's revelation and could not. We are even better off than the angels in our understanding of God's revealed prophecies.

Now look at Titus ii. 11–13: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men (or, that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared), teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously and Godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ." Here we notice three facts stated: (1.) That the salvation which has appeared is a universal salvation. (2.) That it is to teach men that they are not to live ungodly or lustful lives but, as we might state it, are to live soberly in respect to themselves, righteously in respect to their neighbors, and Godly in respect to God. (3.) That we are to be in the attitude of expectancy, "looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing" of our Lord. The three things refer to three periods—past (the appearance of salvation); present (teaching us how to live); and future (the glorious appearing of Christ).

If the prophets of old had to search concerning the truth which they communicated, may we

not hope to gain an understanding by searching into the meaning of prophecy? If not, why has prophecy been given to us?

The first coming of our Lord has now passed into history and the field of investigation and speculation is therefore limited. The second advent is still in the realm of prophecy, therefore the opportunity for study is almost without bounds. Some think that a man who studies prophecy is a fool because he can arrive at no certain conclusion and because, as they say, it makes a man unpractical and visionary. On the contrary, however, we find that students of prophecy are more practical, more powerful and more spiritual than those who ignore it. There are fanatics and enthusiasts who preach foolishness in this sphere, but that is true in any great field of thought, and ought not to prevent wholesome study. Again we are charged with studying in a field of prophecy where there are unfathomable difficulties. If, however, we cannot come to an understanding of these predictions, why are these prophecies given and why are we urged to be ready and looking for their fulfillment. Still further it is said that it is futile to teach anything concerning this subject while there is so much difference of opinion. It is true that there is much that will never be settled, that never was intended to be settled, especially as to dates, for then men would no longer be

expectant. It is not intended that we should know exact details. For instance we may not speak dogmatically as to the "time, times, and half time," or the 1290 days mentioned by the prophet Daniel.

Although I have for thirty-five years studied the subject of prophecy, I feel to-day like a child who stands on the seashore looking out upon the vast expanse of waters, utterly unable to fathom the great depths of God's revelation. Like Canon Hore, the older I grow the more dogmatic I become on the great doctrines of man's salvation, and the less dogmatic as to the details of events of the future. I am only dogmatic upon the facts and the principles.

Have you ever considered why the subject of prophecy should engage our attention? Is there any intelligent being capable of carrying on Christian life without reference to prophecy? Are not all of God's promises concerning our future really prophecies? A man who calculates with reference to the future is accounted a wise man; so should a man be considered wise who studies the field of prophecy concerning the future, which should guide us as to the present. Moreover, if Christ is the center of my life, how can I abstain from the study of the prophetic utterances which pertain to his kingdom? The world's future is wrapped up in prophecy, and only through this can we study the destiny

of the kingdom, the Church, the world, or of ourselves. To refuse to study prophecy, therefore, is to be wanting in the spiritual intelligence and hope of the Christian.

The department of prophecy which we now take up relates especially to Christ, the Church, and the world. There are three general schools of thought with reference to the interpretation of the predictions relating to the second advent of our Lord—namely, the Pretorists, the Historicists, and the Futurists.

The *Pretorists* hold that all that was written by the Old and New Testament prophets was written from their own perview or immediate field of observation, and are prophetic only in so far as any keen-sighted politician might foresee coming events. Some even say that every word in Revelation was fulfilled before the end of Nero's reign. When on one occasion in England I had made an address on this subject before a body of British divines, one brother who held the opposite view to myself arose and said that he had made a careful study of this subject, and that more consummate foolishness he had never listened to in all his life; that anything more fatuous, foolish, and futile could not be imagined. After a few more similar compliments he added that there was not one single line in the whole apocalypse that was not fulfilled before the year 100 A.D. I said somewhat under my breath,

"What about the thousand years?" He continued, "I catch from Mr. Peploe's lips one of those foolish questions which only shows the ignorance of the questioner and with which they are accustomed to try to entrap us. I am fully prepared to answer the question—it is one so foolish, so inane that we simply pass it by as unworthy of notice."

The *Historicists* say that all of Revelation, at least from chapter four to the end, has been fulfilled in detail, age after age, at various stages in the world's history. They say that we stand somewhere near the end of the final fulfillment. So they interpret the messages with regard to the seven churches, saying that these represent the condition of the church at successive periods in her history.

The *Futurists* regard Revelation iv.–xxii. as a vision of the future; to be fulfilled suddenly and absolutely at the time of Christ's appearing. The Old Testament predictions are taken to apply to the same period and they hold that as yet we have not entered upon any of the fulfillment.

My own view is that all three schools have in them a measure of truth, and are intended by God to find a field for study in these prophecies. But none are sufficient, although I believe the Futurists to be nearer the truth.

The great division on this subject is between the

pre-millenarians and the *post-millenarians*. I have no sympathy with the views of the post-millenarians, but am a strong believer in the pre-millennial advent of our Lord. This view is that Christ will appear in the air, take to himself one class of his saints—it is not certain what the dividing line will be—and is then to reign on or over the earth; it is not clear which, though probably *over*, since it would be difficult to localize Jesus in an earthly Jerusalem so that every eye might see him and worship him. I do not wish to speak dogmatically, for prophecy is an humbling study. I only wish to lead you to a closer study, to be less dogmatic as to details, and more positive as to events. At any rate *Christ will come in the air and will call certain or all of his people to himself.*

In order clearly to understand these prophecies a knowledge of the Greek is very essential. Paul uses five or six different terms to express the expectant attitude of Christians towards the coming of Christ. In Titus ii. 13, it is προσδεκόμενοι, "looking for;" in Romans viii. 23, ἀπεκδέχομαι, "waiting for;" I. Thessalonians i. 10, ἀνεμένειν, "to wait for," "expect." These various terms all involve the same general idea in different aspects—"reaching out and longing for," "tarrying patiently till," "waiting to receive with soul upturned"—various altitudes all teaching us to be always ready and waiting.

Why is it said that Christ will come in the air? Paul writes to the Thessalonians in the first epistle that those who were alive at his coming should not go before those that were asleep, but that they were to be caught up together; therefore, they were to solace one another and to be stimulated to greater activity.

In the air, but *when?* Do we look for Christ's coming for his saints before the great tribulation, or after? Christ says (Luke xxi. 36), "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man;" yet in another place he says (Matt. xxiv. 22): "Except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." Will the elect then go through this tribulation which is to occur in the latter days? If so, who then can escape it? The "elect" cannot here refer only to those on earth, nor can it refer to all the elect, for many of the elect have died. Then for whom of the elect will the days be shortened? Some of the elect must pass through the trial, and some will escape, I think.

Let me suggest (only as a suggestion) that you study in this connection the parable of the ten virgins (Matt. xxv. 1–13). The ten were all virgins and were waiting for the bridegroom, but only five of them had sufficient oil. The five wise

entered to the marriage feast while the five foolish were excluded. Does not this mean that all the ten were saints in one sense, and not that five were redeemed and five sinners, five saved and five eternally lost? I humbly believe that all were accepted in the Beloved. The five wise are described as comparatively ready (none were really ready)and had oil—meaning stores of grace, the power of the Holy Ghost. The other five had no oil except a little in their lamps and said, "Our lamps—not are gone out but—*are going out.*" Our lamps never go out if we are the children of God. These foolish virgins were in peril of not being able to follow the bridegroom because of extinguished lights, therefore are bidden to go and buy oil. Would the other five have refused them aid, and, in mocking contempt, have told them to go and buy for themselves, if they had been the children of the world and had been in danger of eternal exclusion from the kingdom? "I never knew you" is a marriage term, and here means that Christ could not accept them and receive them into the feast, but that they must be restored to grace by undergoing tribulation.

It seems to me that we might say of the church to-day, that one-half (I wish it were as large a proportion as that) are ready to go into the marriage feast of the Lamb, and that half, though among the elect, must pass through

the tribulation of the latter days. For their sakes the days are to be shortened. The trial will come upon them at sore cost to their comfort, but they will be accepted at last. The Lord comes and takes the ready and waiting part of the church into the marriage feast in the air, away from the world where they may learn to know each other—as a bridal couple to-day leave their parents and go into seclusion, that each may learn to know and trust the other. If then the Lord is to come, and lift his waiting church into the air before the great tribulation, we must look at the signs of the times to discover whether or not our redemption draweth nigh—the redemption for which our Lord is waiting;—so shall we be ever with the Lord.

This view of the coming of our Lord enables me to believe that the dull, sleepy Christians who are members of the body of Christ as believers, and who are yet grinding along without real hope and joy, and are not ready and waiting to go, are nevertheless not to be lost. The germ of truth is in them, and while "one shall be taken and the other left," it will be for trial and not for eternal destruction. Apparently they shall be in darkness without the presence of the Holy Spirit (their oil); but having been ripened by tribulation they shall become ready, and at the descent of our Lord, at the close of the feast, and the retirement into air (we can't say for how long,

some say three and a half years), will be received by him when he shall come with all his saints, and shall stand on the Mount of Olives (Zechariah xiv. 5). Then comes the thousand years' reign, the millennium, when Christ will have his throne on or over the earth, and during which time the world will have the last opportunity to accept of Christ.

Mankind has had in the past six thousand years many opportunities to turn to God; there has been various dispensations of grace. Man was first tried in Eden surrounded by purity and in communion with God. He failed and fell. Then came the promises of God to redeem men before the flood; then the covenant with Abraham; then the law under Moses; then God sent his Son Jesus Christ to die and to bring men the offer of salvation. All of these have failed to save the majority of mankind. There remains but one way for God to draw men (I say it reverently), and that is by a living, reigning, visible Christ over the earth, and Satan bound. Also when the Lord returns all Israel, as a nation, shall "look on him whom they pierced" and be saved; they shall lead the nations of the earth in seeking the Lord (Isaiah lv. and lvi., and Zechariah xiv.), and shall become such preachers of the Gospel as have never been known.

In the thousand years comes mankind's last opportunity. The earth will continue to have

seed time and harvest; men will die (the child shall die at a hundred years); still some will reject Christ and die in their sins. At the end Satan will be loosed for a season to see if men will turn away from serving God, or if they have become true subjects of the Lord (Revelation xx.). Then Satan prepares to fight with the world against God, but there is no battle. The fire of God consumes the Devil's host, and Satan himself is finally cast into the lake of fire. God now sets up his judgment seat, at which all the dead stand before God to be judged according to their works; nations are brought up for judgment; those condemned to the second death are sent into everlasting fire. After this comes the voice from heaven, "Behold, I make all things new"—not made anew, but renewed. The universe is purged by fire as in former days it had been purged by water, and the earth becomes the tabernacle of the Lord; the new Jerusalem descends out of heaven having "*the* glory of *the* God"—a remarkable expression found nowhere else and signifying the perfection of God's glory. Then God becomes all and in all as Christ had been, who now gives up the kingdom to his Father.

Now comes the trial of the saints according to their use of the talents entrusted to them (Matthew xxv. 20–30). After this the Son of Man in his glory judges the nations of the

earth not according to their use of gifts, but according to their works. Remember that there are few, if any cases where, in judgment, much is made of *sins committed*, for they are purged away by the blood of Christ; men are judged because of what they have *not done*, not because of what they have done. Men are rejected not because of impotence. As a Christian said on his death bed, when asked by a friend who saw him weeping, if he was afraid to die, "Oh, no, I am not afraid, but I am so *ashamed to die*, for I have done so little for my Lord." What have you done for Him in return for what He has done for you? How many of you could say with peaceful and rejoicing hearts, "Even so come Lord Jesus."

Now, what are the reasons for thinking that the glorious event of Christ's coming may be near at hand? How about "wars and rumors of wars?" There are wars in many parts of the world, but it is especially noticeable that all Europe is arming herself seemingly preparing herself for a great battle. "Earthquakes in divers places." I have no less an authority than Mr. Gladstone for saying that the earthquakes of the past two thousand years have been carefully chronicled, and that in the last half century there have been more than during the previous two thousand years. "Men's hearts failing them for fear." It is the opinion of

the most prominent men of the day that never was there so much general anxiety as to what will be the outcome of the present social and political conditions. There was never so critical a period in history. "The Gospel shall be preached in all the world as a witness." This has certainly been fulfilled as never before in the history of the world. It can never be realized in its fullest sense seemingly, for, as has been frequently calculated, the natural growth of heathen populations is more rapid than their conversion.

There seems to be, then, an agreement that the preliminary events have taken place as far as is necessary to a fulfillment of the predictions. All indicates that we are now about at a great crisis in the history of the world.

In addition to this we read in Ezekiel xxxviii. and xxxix. that "Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal (which have been lately discovered in the Russian archives to be names for Russia, Moscow, and Tobalsk, and by which name the Czar is called) shall come out of the north and shall as a cloud cover the land" (of Israel). Genesis x. shows that Magog is a descendant of Japheth, and Revelation xx. connects Gog and Magog with the last days and destruction by the fire of God. It may not be generally known, but it is true, that Russia is now seeking to capture Palestine by estab-

lishing throughout that country what are ostensibly monasteries, but are in reality garrisons of armed soldiers, who are there with the purpose of rising at a moment's notice to capture the Holy City and forever exclude the hated Turk. This seems to point to a fulfillment of Ezekiel xxxviii. and xxxix., to be followed by what is prophesied in Zechariah xiv., when there is foretold the siege of Jerusalem, and after it has been two-thirds taken the Lord descends upon the Mount of Olives and there follows the battle of Armegeddon. Palestine is cleared of its enemies; Israel becomes God's servants, and the millennial reign begins.

We seem, then, to be at a crisis in history. I can see no great reason why we should not live to see the Lord come. Oh, blessed moment; oh, glorious privilege! "Seeing we look for such things, what manner of men ought we to be?" Oh, noblest privilege that I might be the man to bring the last soul to complete the body of Christ! And the instant that living stone is brought into place and the whole completed, we shall hear the shout, "Grace, grace," and the Lord will come. Are you ready? Are you living, looking forward, hastening unto the day of the Lord?

WHAT GOD HATH CLEANSED.

But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, call not thou common.—*Acts xi. 9.*

WHAT voice it was that gave utterance to these words, we are not told either in the tenth chapter when the vision is first recorded, or in the eleventh chapter, where Peter describes it to those of the circumcision in Judea. But Peter in both places describes himself as saying, "Not so, Lord," thus seeming to recognize the voice of Jesus, with whom he had been so long and intimately associated a few years before, and whose will he was now seeking to carry out.

What a beautiful instance we have here of the Saviour speaking from heaven. Therefore it has peculiar force. In the first place it testifies as to what Jesus had done: "what God hath *cleansed;*" and in the second place speaks to those whom he has cleansed and says, that from the time of their cleansing nothing can henceforth make them common or unclean. Jesus, who had performed the wonderful act of cleansing, is the one

most qualified to speak from heaven and to say this. Peter therefore says that God had showed him this blessed truth, that all may be saved because all are cleansed.

There is a dispensational truth in this utterance by Christ. It is a beautiful truth that God no longer distinguishes between Israel and the Gentiles, and now for the first time Peter, the one who had always been of the most strict and exclusive of the Hebrews, was instructed in the universal character of the Gospel. Therefore Peter no longer hesitated when he knew that it was God's will that all men should be saved. He was a humble learner at Jesus' feet. It is a wonderful lesson for all men to learn. Not every man can break down the walls of prejudice which have all his lifetime been hedging him about. Peter had never dreamed that God was willing to let every man come unto the kingdom, so he had to have his eyes opened.

It is a triumph of grace to accept new truth and to live by it. God taught Peter that now all the barriers were broken down, and men were to know that salvation was for all; it was to be preached to men on earth and in heaven, and in hades—if that is what Peter means in his first epistle when he says that Jesus went to preach to the spirits under guard. Whole nations were to see that God's love was bestowed for them. This is a reproach to us, in reminding us how little

we have done to fulfill the last command of Christ.

But there is a deeper truth here. Let us first consider the thought of the vessel let down from heaven. In it were all kinds of beasts of the earth, and creeping things, and four-footed beasts, and fowls of the air. It seems to be a general summary intended to represent the whole creation, and is symbolical of man in his totality as divided into nations, into families, into households, and also as symbolizing each individual considered in the many departments and characteristics of his being. Look at it. You see there a mass of living animals of all kinds and descriptions. The sheet is full of striking distinctions and great contrasts. There is the proud eagle and the crawling worm, the mighty elephant and the loathsome toad. All kinds, from the highest to the lowest are here in one sheet, struggling and striving for the mastery. They are all thus brought together for a purpose. What a picture of mankind; and of man's own individual nature! Men differ from each other remarkably and yet all are bound together without distinction, in one sheet for the purpose of God. Each man has also within him different instincts, qualities and aspirations; at one time we have the highest aspirations, and at another we are fit to be the companions of the devil. There are some noble and some degrading pas-

sions all present in one man, and all men in one sheet. Therefore all kinds of men are to receive the blessing of the Gospel.

Notice also that the sheet is tied, literally "knit together," at the four corners. These men are massed together so as not to escape from contact with their fellows. Of course, the most powerful rise to the top just as they do in the world. Imagine the struggle for life in that sheet tied at the four corners! It is God's picture of man and humanity. They are brought together to show that all are in one place and in one condition. The four corners to stand for the four quarters of the globe—this sheet includes the whole world.

What is the purpose of thus bringing together all these nations, these congregations, these households, these individual men into one sheet? It is that they may learn to know God and to realize their own impotence and degradation; that they may know that all are equal in the sight of God. There is no difference, all have sinned and come short—the highest as well as the lowest, as Paul says in Romans: There is no ground for separation; all are massed in together in a hopeless condition, and their mouths are stopped. God has shut them up in their unbelief and there is no escape—all are in one condition, in one position—all are dead. This applies to the most sanctified and to the most

depraved who are trusting in their own efforts. Some are noble and some are degraded, but all are shut up to judgment. This is humanity in its natural state.

What then is the purpose of God in thus shutting them up? After the vision of man and nature comes the revelation of God's work of grace. The voice says to Peter: "What God hath cleansed"—those whom he has pardoned, whom he has elected, whom he has selected. We know nothing of a universalism taught by the Word of God. There is a mass of mankind who reject Christ that will have to suffer; but what is clearly revealed here is that all humanity is represented in that vessel, and all mankind, nationally and individually, is shut up in a helpless condition. Then the words, "What God hath cleansed" must have their full force. They mean the whole contents of the sheet. It is *all cleansed.* God hath cleansed the whole human race. And men still perish? Yes.

After God had created the earth and the heavens and had put man into the garden of Eden, He pronounced himself satisfied. He saw that it was all very good. But Satan entered the garden and from that time humanity was separated from God. Separation involves death and brings ruin and corruption. This condition of things would have proceeded indefinitely and all mankind would have perished had it not

been for the mercy of God. If in one man's fall all the human race was corrupted, ruined and lost, if by one man death came upon all, is there not ground for the skeptic's charge that God is responsible for sin in us? As one man said to me, "If I'm sinful, God made me and he's responsible for it, not I. Why didn't he make me holy if he wanted me to be holy?" Because man was ruined shall God be accused of injustice? God must not only be the justifier of men, he must be just as well. Man has sinned and shall God be therefore unjust, must he not make a satisfaction for his broken law as well as provide a way of deliverance from sin?

Therefore it was necessary that God should make, in the sacrifice of his own Son, a provision equal to the need, and prevailing over it. Paul teaches this in Romans v. The five "much mores" in that chapter show that God was equal to the occasion and, in Jesus Christ, made for man's justification a provision absolute, perfect and everlasting. Thus the words to Peter were justifiable. The Greek indicates a single act of cleansing—once and for all. If in Adam's fall and ruin all were included, in Christ must not all also be included? In Christ all died (II. Corinthians, v. 14), therefore the debt is paid.

Justification can now take place and the law be satisfied and God justified. "As in Adam all died, so in Christ shall all be made alive." But

the provision of inclusion is not mere satisfaction of the law. In one sense all are alive if they will only accept the provision made for them. How then can man perish? If all are cleansed what need is there of the Gospel? Just at this point notice that Peter is taught to go and preach to the Gentiles. He is told to go not to a heathen outcast, but to a man just and holy before God as far as his knowledge went. Yet to him, the Gospel of the remission of sins in the name of Jesus must be preached, as well as to the vilest outcast.

There is an awful responsibility in the Gospel. It damns a man if he will not accept it. God makes provision for a free pardon, but what if you decline to take it. Here it is—God holds it out to you—take it—if you do not there are awful consequences and the fault is yours, not God's. If you turn your back on God you set your face toward the devil. If the Gospel needed to be preached to Cornelius, then a man's own righteousness will not save him; Cornelius must close with God's bargain. He must take God's gift; that was all he had to do and all was right.

About eighteen years ago, shortly after I had gone to London, I was called upon to visit a dying man who had been told that he was at the gates of death. His wife, who was one of those emotional Christians who always make a great

deal of *feeling* saved, met me at the door and said to me before I went in that her husband had been an infidel for many years, and that she was afraid he would not receive anything from my lips. She hoped that he would not be rude to me, but he was a confirmed unbeliever and scoffer. I asked her not to detain me then, but to let me go to his bedside.

I went into the room and found him to be a great, powerfully built man of about fifty-six years of age. I spoke a few words to him and he said, "Oh, you're one of those —— parsons, are you? Well, I want to tell you I don't take any stock in you. You expect me to feel saved just because you say I should, but you won't get me to do it." I replied, "On the contrary, I should be very sorry if you did *feel* saved, for very probably you would feel damned to-morrow when you were in some extra pain or anguish of body." "What," he said, "do you mean to say that you don't want me to feel saved?" "No," I answered, "I don't. Your feelings will not alter facts, and it is the *facts* that I want you to see. It is a fact that God sent His Son Jesus Christ into the world to die for you, and because of this God the Father offers you free salvation from the bondage of sin and death." "Augh," he exclaimed, "I don't understand all that rot." "Well, I will try to put it more simply. Remember that facts are

facts, and that it is a fact that the Son of God has literally taken your place and paid the penalty for your sins; He has died for you, and so has opened to you the door of heaven that you may freely enter. He has sent me with the document which contains your freedom signed with the blood of Jesus, and I simply ask, will you accept it?" "I don't understand what you're driving at," said he. "Let me put it to you still more plainly then," I answered.

"Suppose that you have committed some crime and you are in prison, and the ~~queen~~ KING, because the Prince of Wales has satisfied the law for you prisoners, sends a pardon to each one of you in prison, and says that if you will accept it you can go out free; and that if you will come to her palace she will give you a home. Suppose that there are ten men in ten cells, and the messenger comes to the first man and shows him the pardon. He says, 'I don't believe the ~~queen~~ KING ever wrote that pardon; it is no more good than just so much waste paper.' The second man says, 'I *hate* the ~~queen~~ KING and wouldn't accept a pardon from her on any account,' and he tears up the paper. The third man says, 'I don't want a pardon, I am contented where I am. I won't take my liberty.' A fourth says, 'Ah, I have been here a long time; this is too good to be true,' and he refuses. The fifth man looks at it and exclaims, 'My God, is this for

me!' He grasps it and jumps up and exclaims, 'Jailer, let me out.' He presents it to the warden who examines the paper, says 'It is all right,' opens the door and lets him out a free man. He goes to the queen and thanks her, and she takes him into her royal home.

"Now all these men were pardoned, that was the *fact* and it did not alter the fact whether they believed it, or felt pardoned, or refused it, or not. But suppose that the queen in pardoning them had ordered that the prison should be burned to the ground on the morrow, as a pest to the neighborhood, and had proclaimed that all who remain in it must perish with it. Whose fault will it be if I refuse the pardon and remain there in spite of the edict?" "Why, yours, you fool," said he. "Quite right," I replied, "only you are the fool this time and not I." Now, it is a *fact* that God has sent me as his messenger to tell you that his Son Jesus Christ has paid the penalty for your sins and has opened the door into heaven for you. All you have to do is to take the pardon, walk into the kingdom, and become God's heir." "Why, you don't mean to say that it is a fact that God's Son died for me?" (And this was the man who an hour before had been a confirmed skeptic!) "Yes," I said, "that is the fact. He died for you." "Can it be true?" he said; "that is a rum saying. Go over it again." I went over it

again. "Do you really mean to say that is true? Tell me it again. I am fifty-six years old, and to this day no man ever told me this before. Do you really mean that God did that for me? Go over it again, won't you?" I told him the story again and when I left him there was a more peaceful look on his face, and the next day when I called to see him, he said "Go back over those facts you told me before, won't you? They have been sticking in my gizzard ever since."

About six weeks later he was sinking rapidly, and they called me to see him. He seemed to be going and his wife rushed up to him and putting her arm around him cried, "John, do tell me that you feel saved, before you go." He straightened himself up a little, and resting upon one arm said slowly and with difficulty, "Wife – feelings – make – no – difference.—Feelings –don't alter –facts.—It – is – a – fact – that – God's – Son– died – for – me – and – opened – the – door – that– I – might – go – into – heaven.—I– die – resting – on that – fact." And he fell back and was gone.

My friends, the Gospel message comes to all; there is not a sinner who may not be saved this moment, for salvation is a finished work and it is free to you if you will accept it. It is for all; the kingdom is opened alike for Gentiles and for believers; to the just and pure and to the vile and outcast. Salvation is an accomplished work. Accept it.

1. This truth does away with sectarianism. You may think you are an eagle and that other sects are the poor crawling worms. All are equal—there is no difference. You may have climbed up to the top of the sheet, but you can never get out by yourself. If you begin to glory in yourself, you are done for. Your only salvation is in God's cleansing.

2. We learn that our duty is to all nations and peoples and languages. Therefore, go and tell them the story of the Cross.

3. Never despair of any man. Seek him out to save him, even though he be as the vilest reptile. Go and die for him if necessary.

4. There is also a lesson for the careless, the cold and the unconverted. "What God hath cleansed." Have you ever thought, when you were giving way to some vile passion or unholy desire, that God had cleansed you. What right have you to defile—to treat as a common thing, to pollute—the body of humiliation which God hath cleansed. Never call it common; never use it for anything low; never use your tongue to speak vile, unholy things; never use your eyes to look on impure sights; never use your hands to perform unrighteous acts. If you do, what must be the awful consequences! In Hebrews x. 28, 29 we read: "He that despised Moses' Law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall

he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" All have been sanctified—cleansed by God. If you neglect to keep clean what can become of you? You who want to sow your wild oats—God has cleansed your being. If you now count it common what can become of you?

5. Christians, God hath cleansed you, should you then be groaning under the bondage of some sin? Recognize the fact that God hath cleansed you; therefore, never again be in bondage to sin as the children of Israel were in Egypt; never be wandering in the wilderness, but take your place in the high places; live in the King's court in the very presence of God. Never make common what God hath cleansed. Of the new Jerusalem we read (Revelation xxi. 27), "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth—the same word, maketh common—neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie." If I am common I cannot enter into the holy city.

Again, never call any man or woman common; no prostitute, or murderer, or miser, however low or degraded. Each one is cleansed by the blood of Christ, only he does not know it. Go tell him that he is cleansed; preach to him the Word that maketh clean.

God hath justified himself. He has provided

salvation from the penalty, and from the very presence and power of sin. Will you stand out on this blessed truth and keep clean by the grace of God that which he hath cleansed by the blood of Christ?

THE PREPARED MESSENGER.

Thus Ezekiel is unto you a sign; according to all that he hath done, shall ye do; and when this cometh ye shall know that I am the Lord God.—*Ez. xxiv. 24.*

Ezekiel is here denoted a sign or type of the servant of God—one whose delight is to make known the riches of God's love. You will never obtain a crown as a messenger of the Lord of hosts, until you become a holy servant of God like the prophet Ezekiel.

The people are described in this book as having received the favor of God, being chosen as the medium of his blessing. God allowed the ten tribes to sever themselves from the two, because of the iniquity of Rehoboam, and could not use them as his witnesses and servants.

There could not be found in all Israel a man wholly given up to God; a man who was sanctified entirely to God's service. To this day the ten tribes are scattered and unknown because they despised the voice of God. But they have not been punished as severely as the other two tribes, because they did not crucify God's Son.

Though God spared them, and offered them mercy, they rejected his offer.

One hundred and thirty-three years after Israel was taken captive into Assyria, Judah and Benjamin were carried into Babylon. There the Lord raised up this man Ezekiel to be his messenger to the captive people.

Why does the Lord select one man from the nation or parish, and give him a special blessing? It is that he may go back to his parish and become a witness for the Lord of hosts. We are called of God to be his witness wherever we go. The nations around us, like Israel and Judah, refuse to take the blessing of the Lord. The people of England and of America have likewise refused to live in the full light of the Lord. We are called to go to those who have refused God's blessing, and are now in captivity. Our own family, our own nation are living in bondage, and to them God would send us.

Ezekiel is the only man to whom the title "Son of man" is given as it is given to the Son of God.* We find it applied to Ezekiel the same number of times (89) that it is used with reference to our Lord in the Gospel according to St. John. Therefore we conclude that the name "Son of man" is used for a special purpose here. The title Son of man is given to Jesus Christ to show

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* Once you will find it in Daniel vii. 13, referring to the Messiah.

that God has called Jesus Christ to be his witness. He can thus take any man to be his witness, who will hear and obey his voice. "Thus saith the Lord God" is repeated over two hundred times in this book. It is the special voice of God to Ezekiel. The Lord prepares his servants to-day exactly as he prepared Ezekiel.

"The word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the Lord was there upon him" (Ezekiel i. 3). These are the first two steps in God's preparations of his messengers: First, the *Word;* then, the *hand* of the Lord put upon man to make him feel that he is a chosen vessel unto the Lord.

Third, there must be the revelation of the *glory of God.* "As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake" (Ezekiel i. 28).

Has the glory of God appeared to you as it did to Ezekiel? It appeared to Paul, to Peter, and to John, and every one in the Old and in the New Testament to whom it came fell upon their faces before it as dead men.

Then came the *Spirit* and entered unto him (Ezekiel ii. 2), and next the *command* beginning with, "Thus saith the Lord God." The command is "Go speak to the house of Israel" (iii. 1), and then follows the message which he is to carry to them.

The word, the hand, the glory, the Spirit, the command of the Lord compelled him to go; he could not stay. How many of us have felt that we *must* go and give a message — fearing to refuse, saying, I cannot escape. The Lord must have a man of fixed purpose. But after he has given the fivefold call, if you still go unwillingly and in bitterness of spirit, the Lord will not anoint you with power.

But a man must abide God's time to speak. "When I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them, thus saith the Lord God; he that heareth, let him hear; and he that forbeareth, let him forbear; for they are a rebellious house" (iii. 27). God would not open Ezekiel's mouth at first (iii. 26), because Ezekiel was not ready, and you will have no power until the Lord opens your mouth.

Men and women go to a convention and talk about the blessing that they have received; they shake the speaker's hand and say that they have "enjoyed it so much." My friends, the entrance into God's blessed promises is not a thing to *enjoy* immediately. For many days

you may not enjoy it, for there are battles to fight and the flesh to be mortified before you are ready for the peaceful enjoyment of the blessing.

Now God says to Ezekiel (chapter iv.), "I want you to get ready and show the people a picture of the City of Peace being taken by the heathen." Ezekiel was told to lie down upon his left side for three hundred and ninety days, according to the number of days that he was to bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. Then he was afterwards to lie for forty days upon his right side in bearing the iniquity of Judah. You must give up all your earthly business, all your work; you must be separated from your home—you will be called a fool for lying upon your side for a year and a quarter—until you feel the curse that has come upon your land, and until you feel the sin of the people of England and America.

But that is not enough. The Lord tells him to defile his priesthood by eating defiled bread. Poor Ezekiel cries out, "Oh, my Lord! I have never been polluted, do not make me filthy in the eyes of man" (Ezekiel iv. 14). God said, "You must do it"—and we too must obey the word of the Lord no matter what it costs us.

God says furthermore, "Dig thou through the wall in their sight, and carry out thereby" (xii. 5). You must remove from the rebellious house. Everybody will stop and look at the

man who is tearing his house down, and carrying everything out. Men will wonder and perhaps scoff, but you must do it. If you are willing to give up your home, and your precious ornaments to be kicked about or carried off by the men of the world, God will use you. I cannot say what God will tell you to do, but what he commands must be done.

Some time ago at Keswick, when I was speaking on this subject and was saying that a consecrated man, like Ezekiel, must be ready to give up his business, his priesthood, his home, possibly even his wife before he could receive a blessing—suddenly a man arose in the audience and bursting into tears said, "Mr. Peploe, don't —don't—don't! Is God going to ask that of me? It seems too much." The man was Bishop Hill, afterwards the first bishop sent to Africa. It was a most solemn scene to see that young man in full strength of body, standing there, weeping at the thought of giving up one dearer to him than life. I said, "Brother, I cannot say what God may do. But may you be ready when he calls."

This man died a short time ago, and Miss Maxwell, one of the missionaries who labored near him in Africa, but knew nothing of what had happened at Keswick, recently told me the striking event of his death. She said that Bishop Hill preached at her parish one Sunday,

and seemed inspired by God throughout the service. He spoke on Ezekiel, and showed how God may require us to give up one thing and then another, in order that we may be brought nearer to Him. At last he said, "You may even be called upon to give up the dearest one on earth to you." "It seemed wonderful," Miss Maxwell said, "he was speaking out of his whole heart. He said, 'Brethren, do you not think that God will give you grace to part with the desire of your eyes, and that you will not sigh with pain?'

"After service he was talking with some friends and just then his wife came in, and he said, 'Darling, sister has been asking me if I could part with the desire of my heart, and not grieve with bitter pain.' She said, 'What did you say, dear?' He replied, 'I have been six months getting ready to say it; thank God, I can say it now. I can part even with you.'" It took him six months to get ready to be a *sign*.

"He was seized with fever on Monday, and on Thursday he died. The wife who had been taken ill previously, died first, and then he died very soon after; neither knew of the other's death."

Be consecrated to God now. He can never show you his glory until you are. The Lord is better than our faith. The Lord knows what is good for us. If he calls any of us to be an

Ezekiel, he will prepare us and give us strength for it. God has to call you, as he called Ezekiel, before he can reveal his glory, and before you can show to others the glory and riches of God.*

The glory of the Lord cannot stay in the house of man because of sin. God wants a consecrated temple, a consecrated people. He is ready to consecrate you, but it will cost you something. Are you ready for any sacrifice?

"Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

"Who is willing in the day of his power?"

May the Lord help you to say: "Here am I, Lord, take me, consecrate me, use me, send me as thy messenger wherever thou wilt."

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*The notes of address are imperfect here, but Mr. Peploe called attention to the fruitful field for thought in the study and comparison with each other of viii. 4; ix. 3; xi. 22, 23; and xliii. 2, 4. The glory of the Lord went up from the city and stood over Olivet, never again to be seen until the rebuilding of the temple. D. L. P.

THE WAY OF BLESSING.

From this day will I bless you.—*Haggai ii. 19.*

We are not ignorant, says the Apostle Paul, of the devices of Satan; and it is well for those who can say as confidently as the Apostle that they are not ignorant of the many tricks and schemes by which Satan is trying to prevent God's people from being blessed, and the world from being saved. It has been well said that where Satan cannot destroy, he seeks to dishearten; where Satan cannot condemn, he seeks to separate. That may be why the Holy Ghost inspired Paul in the eighth of Romans to tell us that while we begin with *no condemnation* we complete our blessedness with *no separation.*

You may have experienced heartrending distress at the thought that you might have lived so much brighter and better and more beautiful lives, and that you might have glorified God so much more, if from the very beginning of your spiritual life you had faithfully utilized the goodness of God to his glory. It is quite

possible that after having reviewed the goodness of God, and their own past failures and follies, many will say, "It is practically useless for me to try; habits are so confirmed, efforts have been so futile, failures have been so many that I see no use whatever in expecting anything better."

Where the devil cannot rob us of our salvation he often easily robs us of our expectation. Your ability to exhibit better, brighter, more powerful and more beautiful lives in future than you dreamed possible in the past, depends upon your conception of God. If we could only comprehend God we should live a perfect life, because "this is life eternal, that they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." It is for want of knowledge of God that our lives are such failures.*

Look at the magnificence of God in his love, his patience, his tenderness and his forbearance, and then say whether you are waiting for better and brighter things and wondering how it is possible for you to live a life of blessedness, a life of power, a life of peace.

* In Hosea, that wonderful book of revelation to men's souls, the Holy Ghost by the prophet shows two great things: first, that sin lay in the want of knowledge and in the refusal of knowledge; and, secondly, that, nevertheless, God was perpetually saying to his people, "Turn and return." The key words to the prophecy of Hosea are *know'edge* and *know*, and *turn* and *return*, as much as to say You have despised the one thing that makes eternal life, you have rejected the Lord and played the whore, whereas you should have been to him a pure and holy wife; yet return, says the Lord, and understand the blessed truth of what God is.

Before I take up the wonderful passage before us, I want to introduce it by a few thoughts from the prophets, and from two or three of the historical books which show how God is ever ready to give a blessing notwithstanding the utter depravity of man.

The Lord Jesus Christ was not revealed from heaven until men had come to utter ruin. It was the same in the days of Noah, and in the days of Moses when the people had sunk until there was not a family on the face of the earth that really belonged to God. God then took one man, Moses, and drew him out from the place of destruction, and manifested his grace unto him, so that through this one man whom God forced to be faithful, a whole nation could be saved and brought out into absolute liberty and blessing. Faithful souls may be made to see that the Lord can be merciful to a people sunk into utter depravity, who knew no better; but when the revelation of God has been made to them, then they were brought out into light and liberty, and did not fall back. Perhaps you have heard of the keeping power of Christ, and still have wandered away from him, so that now you are ashamed to look up into the face of God. That is exactly the position I would ask you to occupy.

In an after-meeting in my own church in London, I was once endeavoring to show a man that

there was mercy for the vilest. The man said, "I have been a backslider; I have wandered away from my Lord until I am absolutely without hope." I said, "God comes to the backslider, and there is hope for him." I turned to the book of Micah where God says that he will sink man's sins into the very depths of the sea, and I said, "You are probably aware that even a cannon ball will not sink beyond a certain depth in the ocean, and yet God says that your sins shall go lower than a cannon ball and cannot come up again." See how the devil will dishearten a soul! The man turned upon me with a look of anguish and said, "Oh, my God, you don't mean to say that a cannon ball will not sink, and that my sins will go below a cannon ball! God have mercy upon me! How awfully heavy my sins must be; there is no chance for me whatever!"

"Resist the devil and he will flee from you." Resist him when he comes with subtle doubts, with difficult questions, with hard and bitter things against you, drive him back by the sword of the Spirit and the shield of Faith; quench all his fiery darts, and listen to the voice of God. What does God say concerning the people who have been brought out from captivity, and have been placed in a position of liberty, joy, and peace with God, and yet have stiffened their necks and hardened their hearts against him?

Have you noticed the turning point in the revelation of God in the book of Isaiah? Up to the thirty-ninth chapter, the Spirit is trying to convince men of sin, of the destruction that awaits the sinner if he continues in his sin, of the general provisions of God for salvation, of the final judgments of God on the earth, and of God's general provision of perfect salvation and glory hereafter. But suddenly when Hesekiah, the king, has refused the goodness of God, who has brought him out of his mortal sin and given him assurance of riches and comfort, and has become boastful and haughty and wicked again, the prophecy changes in character and God mercifully says: "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. Let the voice cry, 'Prepare the way of the Lord!'" For what is he coming? To take the poor little lambs into his bosom, to make the earth that was barren bring forth an hundred-fold, to make the young men rise up with wings as eagles. Is that consistent with the first chapter of Isaiah? Your high critic with all his learning, I am sorry to think, does not know the blessed God. It is exactly what God might be expected to do—to turn to the depraved, the lost and the proud, and to say, "I still forgive, I still enable, I still bring a blessing. Hearken to me, thou worm of

Jacob; with thee, thou worm, will I thresh the mountains." That is exactly like our God, is it not? And yet you have felt yourselves such outcasts that you thought there was no hope for you with regard to this holy life.

Take another instance. Just before the destruction of Jerusalem about 590 (150 years later than Isaiah), when the last days of Jerusalem are coming, everything is sinking into the very dregs of humiliation, and it would seem that there is no hope for the people of God. The ten tribes have been scattered, and now the utter destruction of Jerusalem is at hand, and yet, although they have sinned against the Lord to an awful extent, so that the prophet Jeremiah has to say, "Shame hath devoured the labor of our fathers from our youth; their flocks and their herds; their sons and their daughters. We lie down in our shame, and our confusion covereth us; for we have sinned against the Lord our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even unto this day, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God" (Jeremiah iii. 24, 25). From chapter three to chapter thirty-two it is the same story all the way through, until at last we read in the thirty-second chapter and thirtieth verse, "The children of Israel and the children of Judah have only done evil before me from their youth; for the children of Israel have only provoked me to anger with the work of their

hands, saith the Lord." The next few verses tell us what they had done. Then notice verse thirty-six. "Now therefore,"—one of the most amazing therefores to be found in the whole Bible —"And now therefore, thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning this city, whereof ye say, It shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence." Then to the end of the next chapter we have a series of "I wills" betokening the unsearchable riches of God, and his love and goodness towards his people.

Let us take a stage further than the time of Jeremiah. Within two or three years of his uttering those words Jerusalem was overthrown (in 588 B. C.), and the people were carried away into Babylon where they had to endure seventy years of captivity. Now at the end of the captivity (though the seventy years were not fulfilled entirely), when the time came that Cyrus was about to come to the throne, we read (II. Chron. xxxvi. 22): "Now, in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and put it also in writing, saying, 'Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, all the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of Heaven given me; and he hath

charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up.' "

I am drawing toward solemn deductions from these facts. The opening of the book of Ezra is a repetition of these words which are there followed by a call for the people who are willing to go, and under Zerubbabel six thousand people return to Jerusalem. This edict would seem to have been passed in about 536 B. C. These men come back to Jerusalem. They are the beloved, the elect like you and me, who, having once received the favor of God, have fallen into godlessness and carelessness, and selfishness and depravity, and have as a chastisement been allowed to come into bondage, burden bearing, and distress. We feel we are in captivity and are not enjoying the covenant privileges of God as we might, and yet we believe that we are his covenant people. Now, God gives the edict that sets us free, and we are brought back out of captivity into a position of privilege. We are in Jerusalem. And yet it may be that, like the beloved few who returned to Jerusalem at last, you wander over the ruins of your own past history saying, "Oh, my God, there is no hope for me, I cannot be better. I have sought to overcome that temper, that restfulness, that worldliness, that selfishness to which I have been in

bondage, but I cannot. Only last night I made confession to God and consecrated myself to him. And yet already I have fallen back again; I am in a city of desolation instead of prosperity."

Ninety years after the time of Cyrus's edict, Ezra says: "Oh, my God, I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God; for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens. Since the days of our fathers have we been in a great trespass unto this day; and for our iniquities have we, our kings and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is this day. And now for a little space grace hath been showed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage. For we were bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us" (Ezra ix. 6).

Now take Nehemiah. The whole of the ninth chapter is taken up with that wonderful confession made by Nehemiah, the reforming legislator, as it were, for the country. He lays before God, how God had done for them everything he could in the way of blessing, and at last he says: "Thou gavest them saviours who

saved them out of the hand of their enemies. But after they had rest.". . . You say, "I know what this life of rest is. I entered into it and had blessing for a time, but I fell back, and there is no hope for me." Listen: "After they had rest, they did evil again before thee; therefore leftest thou them in the hand of their enemies, so that they had the dominion over them; yet when they returned, and cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven; and many times didst thou deliver them according to thy mercies; and testifiedst against them, that thou mightest bring them again unto thy law; yet they dealt proudly and hearkened not unto thy commandments but sinned against thy judgments (which if a man do he shall live in them); and withdrew the shoulder, and hardened their neck, and would not hear. They would not give ear; now, therefore, our God, the great, and the terrible God, who keepest covenant and mercy, let not all the trouble seem little before thee that hath come upon us, on our kings, on our princes, and on our priests, and on our prophets, and on our fathers and on all thy people, since the time of the kings of Assyria unto this day. . . . In thy great goodness that thou gavest them, and in the large and fat land which thou gavest before them, neither turned they from their wicked works" (Nehemiah ix. 27–35). From that moment of confession God began to bless them.

I have now traced the perpetual falls of Israel for hundreds of years; the evils of the nation's experience and the goodness of God. He came to them first, as a nation, in Egypt; second, he came to them in the land of Canaan, when they had put themselves in the power of the enemies, and he gave them saviours; third, he came to them when the kingdom had been divided and had become still more separated from God; he sent away ten tribes from the other two, and then when those two utterly failed to comprehend and prosper by that lesson he sent *them* into captivity; then he brought them back into the land of possession and privilege, but the land was then nearly desolate, and the returned captives had only a troubled peace and a partial liberty. That is, perhaps, your condition, and you say: "There is no use talking to me now about the life of peace and holiness and of power; it is impossible for such a one as I."

Now I want to bring you to the position of privilege. Read in Haggai what God says of those who have just come out of bondage into a condition of liberty, and yet have no peace, no power, no life and no joy. The edict of Cyrus was issued about 535 or 536; the people came out from Babylonish captivity and reached Jerusalem in safety under Zerubbabel; they took possession of the land again in peace, and might

have started a life of power, progress and prosperity from that moment. In the year 520 the prophets Haggai and Zechariah were raised up by God to speak to the people of their present position. They had had fifteen or sixteen years possession of the land, deliverance from captivity, years of possibility, progress and peace. What had they done with those years of opportunity?

Many say, "I heard of this life of rest when I was in bondage to the world, and I came back, made a covenant, and took possession of what I thought was the land of Jerusalem—the city of peace—but it has never been a blessing to me. What is wrong in my consecration? I gave myself to God, looked for power, I pleaded for the fullness of the Spirit, asked for a baptism; I thought I had something, but it never came to anything." Brethren, the trouble is this: *You have been too much concerned for yourself instead of being concerned with the Lord God Almighty and his work.* Remember those striking words, the idea of which occurs so repeatedly in the epistles, "Whether ye eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." You ate and drank that you might get strong; you ate and drank that you might get rich and fat in spiritual things; perhaps you took work for the Lord that you might be powerful; you entered upon the position which the Lord

accorded to you that you might become great in the eyes of men, and it has been one long failure.

Look at the prophecy of Haggai. It is contained on but one page, yet it covers a period of three months and a half. It begins on the first day of the sixth month of the second year of Darius the king, and it ends on the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month in the second year of Darius the king. Haggai describes four visions in the two short chapters.

What is the first revelation which the Lord gives to Haggai, whose name means "the visible one." "Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts, saying, This people say, the time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built." Yet, in II. Chron. xxxvi. and Ezra i. we read that Cyrus made an edict that the people should build God a house. It was the one purpose of their deliverance from the bondage into which they had fallen. This bondage was not like the bondage of Egypt into which they were born; the name Babel or Babylon means confusion, and they had gone to Babylon, the city of confusion, simply because they were seeking their own things instead of the things of God. They had years of captivity and trial and pain, and were delivered from bondage solely for one purpose, that they might get away from confusion. God is not the author of Babylon or confusion, he is the author of peace, if we will only take it. Judah

and Benjamin were brought out from Babel that they might build a house of God, and yet sixteen years passed by with practically no fruit. How many years have you gone on in what you have called a position of privilege, as church members, and yet have done little or nothing to the glory of God? You have had perhaps sixteen years of grace with grand opportunities for building, the one purpose for which you were saved. Now, the Lord says to you, "This people say, the time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built." He means that Christian after Christian keeps saying, "It is time for me to think of my soul, I must go to convention, service, meeting, conference, place after place where I can get a blessing." But they are not building God's house; they are not seeking his glory. Beloved, you get stuffed to repletion, and grow sick at last, but you do not go out and live and work for the glory of God and for the true building of the church. That is why you have been dismayed and troubled.

In the fourth verse he says, "Is it time for you, oh ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lies waste?" The object of every true convention or service is that the spiritual house of the Lord (Eph. ii. 19–22) might be built. If you do not serve the Lord night and day; if your money, your thoughts, your plans, your desires are not wholly, absolutely, ceaselessly, consecrated

to building the house of the Lord, no wonder that the blessing of God is not upon you. You will never have God's blessing while you are hugging yourself with the thought, "I must get into the ceiled house, I must be safe. Am I safe from the devils, am I safe from the foxes, am I safe from the miasma, can I in my family be secure?" Poor downtrodden, disheartened Christians are always asking what more they can do to get the blessing into their homes, their souls, their ceiled houses. Look at the house of the Lord, at the church of God, at the world around about you! The church of God ought to stand with its blazing dome of gold lighted up with the light of heaven, to show to the heathen the glory of God. What could the prophets say of the Lord's chosen people who had a double deliverance—first, nationally from Egypt, and then personally from Babylon, when they saw them putting up cedar houses, beautiful villas with an elegant landscape garden, and every provision made for their nice little property, and their family inheritance which they were bequeathed with such care. As long as Christians are so careful about their dollars, their homes, and their ceiled houses, and the Lord's house lies waste, there is no blessing from God.

What came to these people in the time of Haggai? Though they have had their bread, their

liberty, their privileges, their possibilities, they experienced *seven disappointments* (i. 6–9). "Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough." You go to conventions and try to stuff your souls, but go away very heavy. "Ye drink, but are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put into a bag with holes. . . . Ye looked for much, and lo! it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it." You go back to your ceiled house in New York, or Brooklyn, or London, and carry home from your conventions three or four note-books stuffed full with notes. Beloved, if you think that because you get a sense of pleasure and drink down the exhortations to holy living without any effort at all, you are going to gain much, you will find that all has come to very little.

A little child, a sweet little girl, sat playing one day upon the floor of a hall, in England, where she had just come to stay with a friend, and where there was a beautiful window of stained glass. Suddenly, the sun came out, and the whole floor was illuminated with beautiful colors. The child saw them and uttered an exclamation of delight. She ran to the spot, and, pulling out her pocket-handkerchief, laid it over the colors on the floor, and the handkerchief took all the colors. She folded it over

three times and said, "I will take it to mamma." She carried home the handkerchief, carefully folded, and the next day, pulling it out, said, "Mamma, mamma, come, and I will show you such a beautiful thing." She opened her handkerchief and exclaimed, "Oh, mamma, it is all gone! where is it gone to?"

Brethren, you cannot keep God's colors from heaven by wrapping them up in a handkerchief. "Ye took it home, and I did blow upon it."

I heard another story told with great effect at Keswick some years ago. One of the speakers said that he had a friend in Ireland who was always afraid of death, and yet he was a Christian who longed to be nearer to God every day. This man said, "I don't know what will happen when I am dying, and I think the best way will be for me to have a record of my experiences, so that when I am dying I may have them by me to help me recall the goodness of the Lord." He wrote the records, and when he was dying he told his faithful servant to bring him his experiences, so that he might read them and be comforted. The servant went away, but returned after a few minutes and exclaimed, "Oh, master, master, the experiences are all gone; the rats have eaten every one of them!"

Brethren, the rats will eat every one of your experiences if they are all you are going to

lean upon. There is this sevenfold disappointment to the people of God, who dwell in their ceiled houses while the house of God lies waste.

Now notice the *sevenfold charge of God.* (1.) Five times in this one page of prophecy the Lord says, "Consider!" Twice it is, "Consider your ways" (i. 5, 7), and then it is to Consider and see what the Lord is and what the Lord will do, and what the blessing of God is meant to be (ii. 15, 18). You must begin the life of peace and power in the place of privilege. If you have entered the place of privilege and then go back to the old life, you will have no blessing. So the Lord begins, "Consider your ways, your will, your power, your love, your purposes."

But that is not all. The Lord says: (2.) "Go up to the mountain" (i. 8). That is to say, go to the place where God's provision is ready for you. You want timber for the Lord's work to build up the Lord's house; you want supply, go up to the mountain. (3.) "Bring wood;" and (4.) "Build the house."

The next charge is repeated three times over (ii. 4), "Be strong, be strong, be strong." God does not say to go and make yourself strong, but be made strong; the Lord does the strengthening. (6.) "Work" (ii. 4), and (7.) "Fear ye not" (ii. 5).

Look at those seven charges or encourage-

ments. Consider your ways; then consider the Lord; consider Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. When you have considered well say, "The Lord has called me out of myself to his work, to get right out of my ceiled house. I will go to the mountain where the provisions of God are. You must go and get your supplies. God says, "Here is the supply, come up." When Moses said, "I cannot meet this people," God said, "Come up into the mountain," and there God showed him his glory and gave him his supply; the Lord gave him the pattern of the tabernacle, he gave him the strength and said, "My presence shall go with you and I will give you rest." Moses went down reflecting the glory of God. You will never reflect the glory of the Lord at all if you simply go home with your pocket-handkerchief full of reflections. But go up into the presence of the Lord on the mountain and take his supply, and go down now in all the meekness of a servant and say, "I am going to build for the Lord; he gives the power, the strength, the blessing." Then when you begin to build you will say, "I feel so weak, I cannot teach, I cannot work, I cannot speak." The word will come, "Be strong, be strong, be strong"—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost all speaking. "Fear ye not." How good God is! We poor helpless, hungering, doubting, desponding souls, can hear him saying, "Consider your

ways, be strong, work, fear not, for I am with you, saith the Lord."

Now notice the *seven promises of God.* Brethren, these promises are very beautiful, but to claim them you must be at the Lord's work, not your own. All of them contain the words, "I will bless you"—a sevenfold exclamation of my text: "From this day will I bless you." It refers to the day on which the foundation-stone of the Lord's house was laid; the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, after they had been three months and a half listening to him.

The first promise, the first "I will," of the Lord is, "Go up to the mountain and bring wood and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it" (i. 8). The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in your hands. The promise is so simple, so gracious, so tender. You say, "Can the Lord like my work?" It is impossible without faith to please him, but if you have faith he says, "I will take pleasure in it."

The second promise is in the same verse, "I will be glorified, saith the Lord." "Glorify ye the Lord in your body and in your spirits which are his." You say, "What, a worm of the earth glorify the Lord!" Yes, it is with the "worm of the earth" that he is going to thresh the mountain. Because the Lord Jesus humbled himself even unto the dust to build the house of the Lord, God set him at his own right hand

and gave him a name that is above every name, you and I are called to the same work and the same kind of a reward.

The third promise is in the second chapter and sixth verse. The Lord says first of all what view he will take of the work; "I will like it and be glorified in it;" now he says what he will do. "I will shake." It is the way he undertakes to beat back your enemies; whether they are in the heavenly places, in the sea or on the dry land, he will shake them off. This very verse is quoted in the epistle to the Hebrews (xii. 26), when the writer is telling of the glorious position we have in Mount Zion, the new Jerusalem. We have come to Mount Zion that we may glorify God, and God says he will shake the heavens and the earth. When the shaking is ended, only the permanent things remain. "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved. let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire." The very thing to make us steadfast is the fact that God is going to shake the shakable things of the universe in order that the permanent things may remain.

The fourth promise is "I will fill this house with glory" (ii. 7). That was fulfilled when the Lord Jesus Christ came to the second temple and filled it with his glory. The house that

was built afterwards was also to be filled with his glory. We say, "Poor worms of the earth that we are to bring stones for God's house." We put them together and say, "It looks very poor." "I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts." Take courage, brother. It is when you have failed that the Lord comes.

Still further we read, "In this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts" (ii. 9). Why does He keep saying, "Saith the Lord of hosts?" It is because he is conqueror of all.

God's sixth promise is, "I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow chariots and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother" (ii. 22). When Jehoshaphat went out against Moab and Ammon, he did not have to kill; they killed one another (II. Chronicles xx.); and you and I will not have to kill our enemies; they will kill each other. Only go forward in the strength of the Lord, and he will put the enemies to flight.

The last promise of the seven says, "In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, will I take thee . . . my servant . . . saith the Lord, and will make thee as a signet; for I have chosen thee, saith the Lord of hosts." Humble worker shrinking back fearfully, do you hear the words

of the Lord: "I will take pleasure in it, I will be glorified in your poor work, I will shake the earth and the heavens, I will fill the house with glory, I will give peace, I will overthrow all your enemies, and will make thee a signet on my right hand, for I have chosen thee." Blessed be God! Can you doubt him now?

Now, look at the grand basis on which these promises and encouragements are built. "Then spake Haggai, the Lord's messenger in the Lord's message unto the people, saying, "I am with you, saith the Lord" (i. 13). Again, "I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts" (ii. 4); and again, "My Spirit remaineth among you" (ii. 5). There is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—the Lord, the God of heaven, the Lord of hosts, the king of earth, and the Spirit remaining always ready—the mighty Trinity in unity, undertaking for the feeble escaped remnants, the poor despised people. These feeble Jews built the temple and the city of the Lord of hosts. Will you undertake your part in this great work? When you calmly, meekly and humbly enter into covenant, and lay the foundation-stone which God calls you to lay, he says to you what he says to Zerubbabel (Zech. iv. 9): "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundations of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you. For who hath despised the day of small

things? For they shall rejoice and shall see the plummet in the hands of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the Lord." We take the fullness of the Spirit, not for blessing, peace and pleasure, but for power to serve our God, and as the feeble remnant put their trust in the Lord, he fills them to overflowing with spiritual power, and the temple of the Lord shall rapidly be built, and the last stone may soon be put in. Who shall put it in? Perhaps one of us shall put in the last stone of that temple with shoutings of "Grace, grace unto it." Then the Lord shall come and all the saints with him. Will you be ready?

HOW TO MEET TEMPTATION.

"Though I walk in the midst of trouble, Thou wilt revive me; thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me. The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me. Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth forever: Forsake not the works of thine own hands."—*Psalm cxxxviii. 7, 8.*

INTELLIGENCE is absolutely necessary in spiritual matters as it is in temporal affairs. St. Paul, in one of his beautiful prayers for the Ephesians, asks that the eyes of their understanding may be enlightened, in order that they may know the riches of the provision made for men in Christ Jesus, and what would be the glory of his inheritance in the saints, if they would only carry out the high purposes of God, which he has revealed in his Son. God deals with us according to our spiritual purpose and earnestness, and in proportion as we seek to realize our high inheritance of reason as well as of grace, God will bless us in this world of temptation and trial.

It is easy to say, "Thank God, I am saved through the blood of the Lamb, and I need not fear God's wrath or man's temptation; God will keep me safely, because he has provided a way

of salvation for me in Christ Jesus." Remember that while salvation hangs absolutely and solely upon the free grace of God, the final and apparent enjoyment of God hangs distinctly upon the measure of our spiritual apprehension and understanding of the things which God offers to the true believer in his Son. Therefore, it is by no means unimportant for us to ask ourselves again and again, what have we apprehended of Christ? Even after St. Paul had been a Christian for over thirty years, and had been a man of most remarkable progress in spiritual apprehension and enjoyment, he writes to the Philippians that he does not at all profess to have apprehended that for which he was apprehended of God in Christ Jesus. We are apprehended of God in Christ for vast blessings, vast privileges, vast possibilities, not only in the eternal glory after we have done with temptation, but in the present sphere of perpetual temptation. This is no mere metaphysical distinction, but is of tremendous practical importance.

The Lord's Prayer is perhaps one of the briefest we could be called upon to utter in the presence of our Father in Heaven; it is also the fullest that can be formed by human lips, or put forth in human language. The Lord Jesus Christ said, "After this manner pray ye." He also said, "When ye pray, say "Our Father, which is in Heaven." Therefore, it is a model form in

which true Christians should be constantly praying. "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," is sufficient for a petition, but it is not sufficient merely to say it. We must intelligently apprehend what it means. The Christian church is continually falling under the pressure of temptation from different quarters. Christians too often fall because they never pause to consider whether all this temptation which crushes them comes from the same enemy, the same source, or if there are different forms of temptation from different sources. It behooves us to understand whence these different forms of temptation come, in what way they will present themselves to the soul, how they will injure it, and how these particular forms of temptation may successfully be met.

Now, it is perfectly certain that all temptation comes from the enemy. God tempteth no man, says St. James, neither can he be tempted with evil. He tries his children, as he tried Abraham. The same word is used, both in Hebrew and Greek, to express different forms of temptation or trial. When we are tried it is to bring out that which is good; when we are tempted it is to lead us into that which is evil. God must try his creatures in order to prove that they are good; the devil tempts the creature to see if it be possible to lead the creature away from God, and to bring that creature under his own des-

potic authority. It is one thing to be innocent; it is another thing to be virtuous. It is one thing to be like Adam, created after the image of God in perfect purity and simplicity; it is another thing to be like the perfected Christ, who was tried and tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. Remember that while the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin, conformity to the image of Christ, wrought in us by the Holy Spirit, means that we, being changed from glory to glory, may become like the Son of God, and at last be actually one with him, seeing him as he is, and being exact facsimiles of his perfect image. If we could only apprehend this, it would change all our thoughts about the life we are living; we should feel that there is not a moment, not a talent, not a possibility of our being that should not be consecrated entirely to God, and that should not be rendered in tender, grateful, humble submission to his authority; we should feel that we could not afford to go out into the world and engage in its pleasures, its pursuits, and its ambitions, not because we have not the money, but because we cannot afford the peril, the temptation, the risk to the soul's peace and progress. Our ambition, our pleasure should be to get nearer to God. Until such a heavenly aspiration fills our souls, we are not even attempting to apprehend that for which we are apprehended in Christ

Jesus. It is one thing to be innocent, clean, spotless; it is another thing to be powerful, great, and glorious in the sight of God and in the face of our enemies.

We should apprehend that our high calling of God in Christ Jesus is that we be *like him in everything;* not only pure and spotless as Adam was before he sinned, but virtuous. Virtue is tested morality, it is power proved, it is the capabilities of the soul exercised until the qualities and the graces with which a man is endowed, come out into actual exhibition. God has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light that we might exhibit Christ's virtues (I. Peter ii. 9). You do not prove the virtue in a machine until you test it, and show the public that it actually answers the purpose of the inventor. You do not prove the intelligence or virtue of a child simply by making it sit still and smile. You must exhibit the powers of body, brain, and heart before the neighbors, if you wish to prove that your child has peculiar graces, excellencies, and powers. So it is with the child of God; he must expect trial in order to develop and exhibit virtue. We have many enemies presenting to us different forms of temptation, which we can meet intelligently and powerfully only in proportion as we understand from whence the temptation comes, and how in each case that temptation is to be overcome.

First with regard to OUR ENEMIES. Have you ever noticed the strikingly solemn way in which the different authors of the Psalms were led to think about their enemies? These were, for the most part, physical enemies, hostile forces of a human form. Yet no less than forty-two times in the Psalms alone do we find the words my or "mine enemies," besides the many occasions in which they speak of their enemies, thine enemies, enemies and enemy in general. Do you not see at once that the writers of those Psalms must have had a very solemn appreciation of the fact that they were living in the presence of and in danger from very great enemies? To them they were awfully real and really awful, and yet they were only physical enemies. How much more then to realize that we have great enemies in the spiritual domain, and that they are ever around us and upon us, and have peculiar force to use against our poor souls.

Praise be to God, even in the Old Testament dispensation we find the Psalmists speaking calmly of their enemies, and glorying in the fact that they have a grand deliverer. In nearly every case where you find the words "mine enemies," you find "deliverer" or some kindred word.* Take for instance: "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive

* Look also in Psalm cxliii. 3, 11, 12; cxlii. 6, 7; xxv. 2, 19, 21; xxvii. 2, 6, 11–14.

me; thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me." What confidence we see there.

Take another passage, Psalm xxiii. 5: "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." That is a blessed thought. Let the enemies come in all their power and seem to be surrounding you, so that there is no escape, the Lord calmly prepares a table, and you sit down and enjoy your food in the very presence of your enemies. Take one more, because it is so beautiful; the great Psalm of the Deliverer, xviii. 3, 37, 40, 48, 50. No less than seven times in that one Psalm you have deliver, delivered, or delivers; but what do you read about your enemies? "I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies. . . . I have pursued mine enemies and overtaken them: neither did I turn again until they were consumed. . . . Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me. . . . He delivereth me from mine enemies: yea, thou lifteth me above those that rise up against me: thou hast delivered me from the violent man. . . . Great deliverance giveth he." See the great deliverance which the Lord gives to his anointed. That Psalm is the Psalm of the Deliverer, coupled with the fact of the presence of

the enemies; and though the man knows that his enemies are there, he is sure of deliverance; he is confident of protection, but he intelligently looks to the Lord, and claims in the Lord a rock, a strength, a buttress, a fortress, everything that is required.

Now notice how the Lord is a buttress and a fortress, a protector and a shield against all the assaults of our enemies, if we rightly understand what those enemies are. We turn to the spiritual domain, but let me use the physical enemies of Israel as an illustration of the way in which God permits the enemies to make attacks, and yet frustrates every one of those attacks, so long as his people trust in him.

First, what are THE FORMS OF TEMPTATION which array themselves as the enemies of the Christian? The five great enemies that attempt to injure the believer are sin, the flesh, the world, the devil and death. Each of these presents totally different forms of temptation to the believer, and seeks to captivate us by totally different lines of action, and we cannot intelligently meet these different foes until we apprehend the means of deliverance which God has provided for us in Christ Jesus. Remember, however, that no man, as long as he lives in the mortal body, is ever free from the presence of his enemies. We are delivered out of the hand of those enemies, but are not delivered from their

existence, and to say that sin or death, or any other foe no longer presses upon a man's soul, is to falsify every statement of Scripture and every experience of the true believer. That is neither more nor less than the devil's own lie, to persuade a soul that this is a dispensation of extinction; it is only a dispensation of subjugation. There is no extinction of any temptation or enemy that brings temptation, but there is, blessed be God, a perpetual deliverance in the spiritual domain as there was intended to be for Israel in the temporal or physical domain. Being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, they have no power or claim over us lawfully; we are set free from all of them. God does not intend his people ever to be overcome,—"more than conquerors through him that loved us," is intended to be the experience, moment by moment, of every true child of God. Unconsciously we may yield to forms of temptation of which we do not know the meaning or existence. This is the sin of a true, faithful child of God. He is limited not only in his ability but in his knowledge; because of the infirmity of his nature he cannot know yet as he is known. But blessed be God, the blood of Christ is cleansing every moment, so that if a child of God dies at any moment the blood cleanses, and by God's grace, not on our own merit, we pass into the presence of God spotlessly pure. Remember that, because

there are two forms of subtle temptation. One is to ask what is the good of the Lord Jesus being a perfect Saviour if he does not perfectly keep? The answer is that he never professed to keep you perfectly, but only according to your faith. The other question is, if I am perpetually sinning, what is the good of claiming holiness from him? God never said there would be perfect holiness, but that there would be perfect keeping according to the measure of your faith and trust. As I once said to Mrs. Booth, "You preach a perfect sinner, but I preach a perfect Saviour."

As to the forms of temptation let us first deal with what is known as *sin*. Sin is totally distinct from sins. Sins are never embodied as a foe; they are spoken of as an outcome of sin, the works which we have produced. All the sins of a true believer are washed away by the blood of the Lamb, but there still remains the old evil part called sin, which is personified by the Apostle Paul in Romans, sixth and seventh chapters. This sin, as a personified force in me, means, I think, that old, evil taskmaster which dominates every child of Adam from the moment that our first parents fell in the Garden of Eden until the soul is delivered by regeneration and by the indwelling of Christ. We are always in the presence of temptation from sin. As a taskmaster sin no longer stands over the

believer, but is still always pressing upon us as an enemy seeking to lead us into evil. But we have a perfect Saviour and a perfect deliverance to the extent of our knowledge, our faith and our trust in the Lord Jesus; beyond that I know of no perfection, therefore nothing that we bring forth is perfect in itself.

Sin is a dominating influence that once held absolute sway over the child of Adam; but the moment that child of Adam is regenerated by the Holy Ghost, and admitted into the Lord Jesus Christ, he has died unto sin. Men say that they are dead to sin because the words in Romans vi. and Colossians iii. are translated, "Ye are dead;" but the Greek is, "You died." They refer not to a state at the present moment, but to an act performed for us by Christ Jesus. By virtue of his death upon Calvary's cross, we by inclusion died in him, because he died as if he were all of us in one. We do not experience a sense of death for we have none of the dying to do; it was done. Christ died so as to have done with sin, and to give us the same position and the same appreciation of the position which he occupies and enjoys, namely, that we have been released from the power and domination of sin as a slave-master. St. Paul says again and again that he is freed from sin, freed from the condemnation, and also from the task-power of sin (Romans vi. 7, 18). He goes on to say

(Romans vii.) that sin as a present pressing force came upon his soul once when he was under the law, and sin revived and he died. Then he says, "If I do anything wrong, now that I have come to appreciate Christ, if I am led to do anything evil by the pressure of sin, it is no more I, but sin that dwelleth in me." He asks, "What is to be done? How am I to get free from the power of this awful temptation? Thanks be to God," he says, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." He takes hold of the truth that once for all he has been delivered from that fearful bondage, that terrible task-power, which sin had over him in Adam's state, and now having been put into Christ, he is a delivered soul.

Now in order to make this doctrinal statement experimental, see the illustration of this in the experience of the children of Israel. Egypt represents sin as a taskmaster that tries to hold the children of Adam. God delivered the children of Israel from Egypt by giving them that passage through the Red Sea, and then by drowning their present pressing taskmasters who followed them. They were thus forever set free from the power of the Egyptian taskmasters. Nothing could lead them back into slavery in Egypt except their own free will. God caused the Red Sea to roll between them and their foes, and they were actually delivered, so as to be in God's charge if they would only

face God's holiness at Mount Sinai. The moment you are saved from your enemy, you must be prepared to see and walk according to the holiness of God henceforth. If the children of Israel had been ready to live according to the holiness of God, they need never have stood in fear of Egypt, their old taskmaster, as long as their nation existed. But they chose to serve other gods, and so in the days of the kings the Egyptian forces came into the land of the people of God again and again, and God said that he would let them go back into Egypt simply because they would not walk in the holiness of God. You have been set free; and are to be forever for God, and not to fear your old enemies or to meddle with sin.

How shall we meet sin when it rises up and says: "You are my slave; you say you are free from the wrath of God and the power of sin, but I claim you as mine." You know the force of the temptation to say: "I cannot face it; I have not the courage; I am afraid." What right have you to be afraid? "Fear ye not;" that is the privilege of the true believer. "Be strong, fear ye not for I am with thee." The moment the old evil power comes and says: "You know that you were a slave to that lust, you could not resist it; you were a drunkard, and you are my slave;" then look up into the face of God and say, confidently: "By the grace of God I

am what I am, and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain, so that I am delivered."

This temptation from the old taskmaster, sin, is one thing that causes the child of God to fall so often. They thought that they had the liberty and freedom of the children of God, but the first time they passed the old temptation, they said, "Oh, my God, I cannot resist;" and they fell. They have not apprehended that for which they were apprehended of God in Christ Jesus, to live a life delivered from the pressure of the old taskmaster, and given absolutely unto God. I tried for two years to feel dead unto sin, and I never experienced the liberty which that thought ought to bring until I suddenly saw the other side, "I will live unto God." The right hand of the Lord has dashed in pieces our enemy, sin (Exodus xv. 1–10), and when the old enemy says, "I will pursue; I will follow after; . . . I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them;" say, with Moses, "Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them; they sank as lead in the mighty waters." Claim an accomplished deliverance through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ and the resurrection power which leads us to God.

Second, how shall we meet the temptation that comes from the *flesh?* The flesh is quite distinct from sin; it is the medium through

which sin leads us into captivity. It is the force within us which constantly inclines us to evil; it is that lower part of our nature which has come into the domination of sin and the devil from the moment that Adam and Eve fell, and which has held us captives with regard to our peace of mind, our appetites, tastes, and desires, until we are brought into Christ Jesus and become new creatures in him. This flesh is a perpetual, subtle pressure from within, quite distinct from anything that oppresses us from without. It claims to have opportunities for gratification to present to us, to have pleasant things that shall satisfy, comfort, and cheer us. The temptation is very great and very real, and may be expected to last to the very end of our existence upon earth.

St. Paul carefully distinguishes between the flesh and the Spirit. He says that the moment we are born again as children of God, so that we can cry "Abba Father," a new spirit of life is introduced into us, and henceforth we have two forces working within us and seeking to draw us—the one called the Spirit and the other the flesh. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh" (Gal. v. 17). God claims us on the one hand, and on the other the personified evil thing called the flesh claims us, and says, "You have always been mine, why turn from me? I offer you ease,

I offer you pleasure, I offer you satisfaction. Why struggle against your appetites, they are your natural instincts? Why should a man not take a drink, and enjoy sowing his wild oats? Why should he not have a little pleasure in this world? Why should he think that his appetites are wrong, because they bring satisfaction to the flesh?" Why? Because being set free from our old taskmaster, sin, and being taken into the death of Christ, and into the life of Christ, we belong to God, and the Holy Ghost has come into us to give us a different life. Instead of being ruled by the old evil appetites that gave us an inheritance of evil, we should learn to live unto God. The body as well as the mind, the mind as well as the heart, the heart as well as the spirit should all be brought into subjection to God, so that we are no longer to let the old appetites work, but are to allow the spirit, which lusts against the flesh, to bring us into the heavenly life.

Look at the appetites called fleshly indulgencies: ease, carnality, covetousness, pride. These are the works, not the fruits of the flesh. St. James says that we are tempted when we are drawn aside by lust, and "when lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished (full grown) bringeth forth death." It must bring death, because it separates us from God.

How are we to meet these temptations which come from within, and are essentially the temptations of the old nature within us? The answer is in every part of the writings of St. Paul, that we walk not in the flesh, but give ourselves over to the Spirit to walk in the Spirit. The moment that we recognize a pressure of lust or temptation to selfishness, or temper, or fretting, we must realize that our life is to be lived unto God, and that our hearts are to be set upon things above. This is what St. Paul means when he says that if we are risen with Christ, we should set our affections, our desires upon the things of God which are above with Christ at the right hand of God the Father (Col. iii. 1, 2). You died in order that you might live a new life. Live that life! How? By determinedly giving yourselves over every moment to the indwelling power of God, and no longer yielding to the lust within you.

Look again at the experience of the people of Israel. We read in Exodus xii. 38, that "a great multitude—a great mixture—went up also with them." On the night of their deliverance from Egypt they went up a mixed people when they should have gone up a powerful people. We read later in Numbers xi. 4, that "the mixed multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again." They allowed themselves to be led by a mixed

multitude into this passion. They said, "Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish which we did eat freely in Egypt; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic; but now our soul is dried away; there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes." The children of God are too often to-day led by the mixed multitude to think that the things which God provides are not enough to give satisfaction and comfort and pleasure. The mixed multitude say, "You know you had pleasure in the world when you were in bondage to sin, you liked the things you had, those onions and cucumbers and melons." The pressure is upon you as it was upon the children of Israel, because you have a divided heart, because your soul is not given over entirely to God. When the mind and heart and spirit shall all be given over to God the Holy Ghost, then we shall no longer have mixed ideas within, and the temptation of the flesh, but we shall wholly yield to, and live in, the Spirit of God. Whether our temptations of the flesh take the form of gross passion, or of self-assertion, self-conceit, and self-satisfaction, they are to be met by this, "I am alive unto God, I belong to the Holy Ghost, I must give myself over to him, and walk in the Spirit." St. Paul says, "If ye live in the Spirit, then walk in the Spirit; and as many as walk in the Spirit, let them be led by the Spirit."

The third temptation comes from *the world* which represents three things. St. John says (I. ii. 16), "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." Here men's lust of the flesh is described as the world. The lust of the flesh in the world is very different from the lust of the flesh in us. The one is internal, the other external. A man who has an impure thought and is alone with himself in a dark room, still has the impure thought before him. The more he thinks of it, the worse it becomes; he cannot escape from it, except by the apprehension of something holy in place of something unholy. He can only escape by thinking of Christ, of God, and his deliverance; he will find deliverance from the evil by the introduction of the good.

The lust of the flesh in the world is very different; it is something external, such as a vile picture, or the odor of liquor—anything which seeks to draw a man into the act of evil. A man who sees an impure play in a theater is tempted from without, rather than from within, until his own passion is aroused and he commits sin. There must, therefore, be a totally different way of meeting this temptation from the way of meeting that from within.

Now, what are we to do with the temptation from without, that appeals to the eye and ear

and mind? If somebody tells me an indelicate story or shows me an impure picture, and so offers a temptation to the lust of the flesh, how am I to meet it? The devil said to the Lord Jesus, "If you will fall down and worship me, I will give you all the kingdoms of the world." That was a temptation through the eye. When he said, "Take that stone and make it bread;" that was a temptation through the lust of the flesh from without. Then tempting Jesus through the pride of life, he said: "You can fall down from this pinnacle because God hath said that he will give his angels charge over you; you need not be afraid because you are God's son." So through the pride of life we are tempted to say, "I can go into places dangerous to my soul, though others could not." I have known many a man to say, "I can go into society, others cannot; but I can go without any harm." They fall as Jesus would have fallen if he had not looked up to God and said, "It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

Here are the three forms of temptation in the world: the lust of the flesh that seeks to kindle passion within me through presenting something pleasant to the body; the lust of the eye that seeks to kindle an evil desire by presenting something attractive to the sight; the pride of life that would make me lean upon self where I

ought to depend upon God, and not go into temptation. When there is a pressure within, I can only escape by presenting a holy thought instead of an evil one. When there is a pressure from without, we are bound to do exactly as God commanded Israel to do with regard to Moab, Ammon, and Edom, who clearly represent to Israel what the lust of the flesh in the world, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life represent to us.

Moab and Ammon were the children born of incest between Lot and his daughters, and were akin in a carnal manner to Isaac and Jacob and the children of Israel. Edom is the brother of Jacob, but the carnal brother, who marries into the world and gives himself over to carnality. These three are linked together at least fifty times in the Old Testament, and always with the same idea. Notice how God taught the children of Israel to treat these three foes, and learn how to deal with the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. God says to Israel, "Ye are to pass through the coast of your brethren, the children of Esau, which dwell in Seir; and they shall be afraid of you: take ye good heed unto yourselves therefore: meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a foot breadth; because I have given Mount Seir unto Esau for a possession. . . . Distress not the Moabites,

neither contend with them in battle: for I will not give thee of their land for a possession; because I have given Ar unto the children of Lot for a possession. . . . And when thou comest nigh over against the children of Ammon distress them not, nor meddle with them: for I will not give thee of the land of the children of Ammon any possession; for I have given it unto the children of Lot for a possession" (Deuteronomy ii. 4, 5, 9, 19). This is a remarkable charge when we consider that passing through the wilderness, the children of Israel could not escape going through Moab, Ammon, and Edom. You must go through temptations of the world; the man who tries to be a monk, and the woman who wishes to be a nun are seeking to escape what never can be escaped, for pressure must be apprehended from Moab, Ammon, and Edom. What are we to do with regard to them? "Meddle not with them." Do not fight with them, because they are your brethren. Do not look in scorn on everyone who does not agree with you. Do not condemn Mr. —— because he goes to the theater. You have no right to meddle with them either for good or for evil; but remember that it is your place to keep from the evil that is among them, and to pass by as quickly as you can; you have no inheritance with them any more than they have with you.

What do we see in the twenty-fifth chapter of

Numbers? "Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab." The whole chapter is given to the lust of the flesh presented through Moab to God's people Israel. The temptation was such that Israel fell, and they had to be blasted and blighted, and thousands of them destroyed before they could be delivered from the cursed effect of the pressure of the lust of the flesh through Moab. Moab represents the action of the external lust of the flesh. Look at Moab's banishment (Jeremiah xlviii. 1, 11, 28, 32): "Against Moab, thus saith the Lord . . . Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity; therefore his taste remained in him, and his scent is not changed. . . . O ye, that dwell in Moab, leave the cities, and dwell in the rock, and be like the dove that maketh her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth. We have heard the pride of Moab (he is exceeding proud), his loftiness, and his arrogance, and his pride, and the haughtiness of his heart. I know his wrath, saith the Lord, but it shall not be so; his lies shall not so effect it." [Why?] . . . "Thy plants are gone over the sea, they reach even to the Sea of Jazer: the spoiler is fallen upon thy summer fruits and upon thy vintage." The whole chapter is filled

with the idea of their being drunkards and lustful men, who walk according to the flesh, and God says that he will have to punish them according to the nature of their sin. They will not give themselves to anything except vessels that are yielded to lust, therefore God says, "I will empty you out of your vessels, you that are empty, and you shall be heavily punished."

Ammon represents the lust of the eye. Notice how (Judges x. xi), when the children of Israel came into possession of their own land given them by God, Ammon came down to claim it, and tried in every way to rob Israel of their inheritance. See what is said "Concerning the Ammonites" (Jer. xlix. 1, 4, 5): "Thus saith the Lord, . . . Wherefore gloriest thou in the valleys, thy flowing valley, O backsliding daughter? that trusted in her treasures, saying, Who shall come unto me? Behold! I will bring a fear [a punishment] upon thee," saith the Lord God of Hosts. This is their punishment; (Ezekiel xxv. 3) God says, "Say unto the Ammonites, hear the word of the Lord God; thus saith the Lord God; because thou saidst, aha! against my sanctuary, when it was profaned; and against the land of Israel when it was desolate; and against the house of Judah, when they went into captivity; behold! therefore, I will deliver thee to the men of the east for a possession, and they shall set their palaces in thee, and make their

dwellings in thee; they shall eat thy fruit, and they shall drink thy milk." It is a good land that they have cherished and nourished; why must they hand it over to the enemy? Because their eyes lusted after Israel's possessions, and God brings punishment upon them exactly according to their sin.

The pride of life is seen in Edom (Jer. xlix. 7). Concerning Edom, thus saith the Lord of Hosts: "Is wisdom no more in Teman? Is counsel perished from the prudent? Is their wisdom vanished? Flee ye, turn back, dwell deep, O, inhabitants of Dedan; for I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him, the time that I will visit him." The whole of Obadiah's prophecy is given over to a judgment of the people of Edom, because they asserted their pride against Israel, and set themselves up against the living God. The world will have their judgment from the living God, but it is not for me to condemn my neighbor, because he agrees not with me. I may try to bring him into the covenant of the Gospel by love, but I am never to condemn a man, because I see him go over to the lust of the flesh and become a drunkard; I am never to condemn those who are in the pride of life; I must pass rapidly through them, and not stay to fight.

The fourth form of temptation is *the devil.* The devil will never cease to tempt, but he tempts in a very different way and in a different

sphere of our being from that of the world, or sin, or the flesh. All temptations come from Satan, but he uses different media. Sin tempts as a taskmaster, the flesh tempts with allurements from within, and the world from without. The devil comes with his own special forms of temptation: in the two extremes of man's being, in his highest aspirations for good, or in his lower feelings of cowardly fear. The devil comes to us either with pride or with lies, to puff us up, or to terrify us. Notice how it is put before us in Ephesians vi., and you will see how to meet it. We are supposed to be in the heavenlies with Christ; the devil is below in the air, and tries to draw us out of the heavenlies with two forms of temptation. He says to one Christian, "You claim to be in the heavenlies; you! do you think yourself fit to sit above all principalities and powers in Christ Jesus! How dare you claim to be where the Son of God is in the presence of the Father!" He terrifies you out of your spiritual life, until you become dejected and miserable. We say that a Christian who gets into clouds of darkness within has lost his faith. He has been drawn from the heavenlies into the cloud of the wicked spirits that lie under the heavenlies. Christians, we were meant to be above the clouds, and to sit in heavenly places.

The other forms of the devil's temptation is when he says, "You are in the heavenlies with

Christ Jesus; you are one with the Son of God; you are a great man, a wonderful preacher, a splendid worker; you are one with Christ; you are in a position as lofty as the beloved Son of God can occupy." The devil persuades the man to think that he is a god. First he dejected him until he was a devil in hell, then he exalted him until he was a god on the throne. You begin with cowardly terror of the old flesh-life and passions within you, then you rise to the world around you, then to the heavenlies where you meet your temptation from dejection to exaltation.

We are to meet these two temptations in exactly the same way. Say what St. Paul said to the Ephesians: "You that were dead in trespasses and sins—children of wrath, vile, miserable, helpless worms, and deserving nothing but indignation—hath God exalted to his own right hand in heavenly places." You do not deserve it but there you are, so that pride and fear are both put away, when you recognize that you are in the heavenlies, strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one." You are saved from the attacks of the devil as long as you use the shield of faith, the breastplate of righteousness, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit as Christ used them against the devil in

the wilderness. The devil is the only enemy we are told to fight. We are never told to fight the flesh; we are to give it the sentence of death. We are never told to fight the world; we are to give it the go-by. But we are told to fight the devil, because we are in the heavenlies, and he is trying to drag us down.

Look at the children of Israel. They were told never to fight until they came into Canaan. Amalek represents the hostile world that attacks you on your way to glory. You need not fight them, but need only grasp the rod of God's power and stand with both hands held up to Heaven, and Amalek is beaten. But in Canaan you have to fight with Anakim, giants, and cities walled up to heaven. The enemy fights, but down go the walls when the children of Israel shout the praises of God; away goes the enemy when they use the sword of the Spirit; down fall their foes, as soon as they really trust the Lord; there stands the sun; he never goes down as long as you have a battle to fight; you gain the victory when you use the sword and strength of the Lord.

There is a beautiful thought in what the harlot Rahab said to the spies: "I know that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you." That is the victory over our foes in the heaven-

lies; they have come to faint with fear because of us. The way is all ready for the victory, if you can only get your enemy to be afraid. Blessed be God, the devil hath become an arrant coward since Christ's death, if he never was before, and we have to meet only a cowardly enemy. Those splendid fighting epistles of St. James and St. Peter, therefore, say, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you."

Lastly, consider *death*. St. Paul calls this the last enemy that is to be destroyed. It is only the fear of death that the Apostle speaks of in Hebrews ii. 15: "Christ has delivered them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Again (II. Timothy i. 10) he says: "Christ hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." Thus, when we think of death, we should say, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." I have not been able to find anything in the history of Israel with regard to the way we should deal with death, because Israel's history only carries us to the point of dying, and never takes us beyond the present life. Agag is the only one who, to my knowledge, pictures our true relation to death. He said, "Truly the bitterness of death is past." We are not now to look for death but for the coming of the Lord. Therefore, knowing that I am conqueror with Christ

whatever befalls, I need only look into the face of Christ and think of those blessed words of Jesus, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." I have, therefore, no need to fear death.

Beloved, we have mighty enemies, but they have been taken so far away from us that we are set free from their hand; and now it is intended —and surely you wish to fulfill God's divine purpose—that you should serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of your life, and in death, even forever and ever. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

THE SERVANT OF GOD.

"Moses verily was faithful in all his house* as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after."—*Heb. iii. 5.*

MOSES, the great law-giver of Israel, was a servant in a master's house, and in considering the subject of service I am not ashamed to call it slavery. It must be slavery of a particular kind, however. The word used concerning Moses is not the word for slave, as in many cases of others, and once of Moses in the New Testament where he is called a "steward" of the manifold grace of God. Remember, however, that when the Bible was written, the steward in the house of an Eastern prince was as much a slave as the lowest menial in the household. He was a privileged slave, an intermediary between the other slaves and his master, but he was an absolute slave, liable for any offence to be castigated or destroyed. Eleazer was the steward of Abraham, and was perpetu-

* "His house" means God's house, as it says in the sixth verse, "Christ as a Son over his own house, whose house are we."

ally thinking of his master. In the twenty-fourth chapter of Genesis, he used no less than twenty-three times the expression, "My master." It is one of the most beautiful passages to display the true stewardship of the grace of God, and the privileges of the servant who is called to represent his master in the great matters of life, more especially for those who are called to act as stewards in seeking a bride for the master's son. If we are called to be anything as servants or slaves, it is that we may, like Eleazer, go forth into the world under the direction of our God, to seek a bride for our master, God's Son.

In order to apprehend the reason why we are servants, if we are really servants, we must first recognize our position as creatures, creatures called into existence by the fiat of God, and therefore, like every other creation, absolutely subject to his sovereign will. The difference between us and a piece of clay in a field is that that clay obeys the Lord's will unconsciously, because it must; we are to obey consciously, because we may. Because we are endowed with free-will and the glorious dignity of reason, it behooves us to be far more submissive to our Lord God than the clay. We should obey as absolutely, but with infinitely greater intelligence and joy, because we are called into existence for our Lord's own pleasure. What the elders

cry before the throne (Rev. iv. 11), "For thy pleasure they were and are created," applies to us exactly as much as to the angels in glory.

If we are called into existence to fulfill God's holy will (Eph. i. 5), then that fulfillment should be absolute, and uninterrupted through all eternity. But although we recognize this duty we find that we are incompetent perfectly to fulfill that will, owing to the infirmity and corruption of our nature, and we, therefore, say that the thing cannot be, therefore it need not be, therefore it shall not be. So we acquiesce in the difficulties of our position, and bow before the temptations that assail us, and call them the "infirmities of the flesh." Men and women calmly continue in their faults, which they know to be sins, but which they try to palliate by excuses or to expiate by pledges, and they scruple not to say, "Man must sin, then let him sin; man must fall, then let him fall; God will be gracious; God will forgive, or what is the good of the Gospel?" We are practically saying, "God allowed me to be born with an infirmity that necessitates a fall; then let him pardon me; let him lower his standard to meet my necessities; he dare not demand perfection because he knows that I cannot attain it." Away with such blasphemies, my brethren, I beseech you. We are called to preach another Gospel.

The Salvation Army in their catechism say that perfection of life only means living up to the possibilities of an infirm nature, since God asks no more of his creature than that creature can perform; to do right in everything means simply to do what God would like me to do so far as my conscience tells me and my mind can understand. That is perfection! That is making God nothing more than a superior creature like yourself. That sets no absolute standard toward which we are to advance, but every man's relative view becomes the true standard of perfection. God's perfection then varies according to the standard of each man's apprehension, and men take God to task if he demands more than they think that they can render. Away with such doctrines, and let us come to one standard, the absolute and perfect standard of God.

Well do I remember the beautiful effect produced upon my soul when a great philosophic leader of the Brahmo-Somaj spoke in Exeter Hall for the benefit of the Bible Society. He began by saying that he had studied thirty-three creeds to their depths, having given his life to the study of creeds to find which was the perfect one. He said that he never came to any satisfaction of soul or rest of mind or conscience until he opened the Christian Bible, and at the outset read, "In the beginning, God——" He said, "There I stopped. That was enough for me,

for in all the creeds of the East I had never yet met with one that portrayed a personal creator who, out of his own inherent power, called all things into existence. That was sufficient for me; I felt: 'Here is the divine revelation.'"

So I would say, that to every truly established Christian there ought to be a fixed standard of faith and duty, a great revelation from God of his privilege and obligation in every respect from the beginning to the end of eternity. We must put God to the front, and then remember that the standard of holiness which we are to attain must never be lowered to meet the necessity of man's circumstances, but must remain the same, the absolutely true and perfect standard of God himself. If God were ever to lower his standard to meet man's requirements, there could never be satisfaction through eternity for us creatures, because we hope to rise higher and higher, to be nearer and nearer to God. If God lowered his standard of holiness to meet our ideas down here in our imperfection, how could we continue to reverence him as the Absolute and All-perfect One? Therefore, a creature is called into existence to enjoy fellowship and union with God; to know God, until he becomes in some sense the representative of God. Should there not always be present to that creature's mind this one thought, "I am made for God, I am to represent God to the things below me, I am to walk

in oneness with God; the ambition of my soul is so to be the very reflector of God—that I become one with him, and yet remain a creature to the end of eternity?" If that be the standard it is evident that something must be done to meet man's present circumstances and to bring them into accord with what God requires which is nothing less than perfection. Our Holiness is the extent to which we carry out that perfection. Hereafter, we know that we shall be perfectly holy; but, must men content themselves with that hope while they are constantly falling here on earth? No. It is true that we shall always come short of the glory of God, but there need be no lowering of the standard of true holiness which consists in unceasing and perfect service, the carrying out of the will of God.

How has God met the need of man who is manifestly an infirm creature tempted on every hand to do evil? After Adam's fall God gave him a promise, and for centuries men lived under the dispensation of that promise which, however, failed to accomplish the salvation of all mankind. Then came the redemption from Egypt, and the giving of the law, and men lived under the redemption from bondage and in the possession of apparent fellowship with God; but the requirements of the law were too high, and failed to save them. God next sent his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and "what the law could

not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Thus we have a declaration on the part of God, that in Christ Jesus there is provision made whereby weak and sinful man may rise far above the standard of the possibilities of the Old Testament, for Christ has given to man a power to fulfill the righteousness of the law, if he walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. We are, therefore, endowed above all others that ever lived before us, for we live in the dispensation of the Holy Ghost, which is an awful prerogative. Men talk lightly about the scheme of redemption, the blessings of salvation, and the glory of the believer's inheritance, and forget that it is not the glory of the inheritance to which the saints are to look forward, but as St. Paul says, "The glory of Christ's inheritance in the saints." It was said to Levi, "The Lord is your inheritance," but they were also the Lord's inheritance. It is said in the Church today, "The Lord is our inheritance," but we are also the Lord's inheritance. We take of the fullness of God, but we, the church, are also "the fullness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. i. 23).

It is only when men are forced to the conviction that God meant better things for them than they

have known, that they seem driven to the conclusion that it is not with God that the responsibility for man's failure rests, but in man's want of faith. If faith could only rise to its fullness of fruition, I believe that we should be perfected, as we shall be perfected when faith is lost in sight, and "we shall be like him, because we see him as he is."

Let us look at Moses as an example of one who was enabled to glorify God as a servant. It is in the idea of a slave, but different from Moses' slavery, that I wish to exhibit our highest privilege. The position of slave is the true position for us to occupy under the Gospel, and is a position of honor instead of one of degradation.

It is a position of honor because Jesus Christ was pleased to take upon himself the form of a slave. We cannot become true children of God in all the glories of adoption and inheritance, until we become exactly like Christ. We must, therefore, go through the agony of death by a condition of slavery as the Master did. Consequently, St. Paul declares repeatedly that his highest dignity is to be the slave of Jesus Christ. He says to Timothy (II., ii.), "Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus"—and proceeds to trace out the characteristics of a true son of God. He says that when a man becomes a son, he becomes a soldier, an athlete, a husbandman, a part of the house-

hold, a vessel, and he closes by calling Timothy the servant of the Lord as being the highest dignity for the child of God. Thus, if we fulfill our privileges as children of God, apparently the noblest of all our positions upon earth is in being δοῦλοι, slaves. We lose the idea of slavery when we think of perfect acquiescence in the will of God, and the joy of the presence of Christ.

If this be the position of the true child of God, Christians are different from those who lived in the Old Testament dispensation in having as a starting-point sonship to God. We have a motive power which they never had. Moses fell, but we may not therefore expect to fall, for we have a motive power that was lacking to even the noblest of God's Old Testament saints; we have the indwelling power of the Holy Ghost, which gives us a new life, the very life of the Son of God. While the Old Testament believers were only expected to "*keep* the commandments of God," but the New Testament saints are "*kept* by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last day."

Moses may serve us as a pattern of a true servant of God even though he was a slave in another's house, while we are sons in a Father's house. We find in him a magnificent testimony to what you and I might be if we were only faithfully yielded to our Lord as his children for

enjoyment, and as servants for service according to his demand. It is very beautiful to study the picture of him, traced in the book of Hebrews, among what are called the "Heroes of Faith." We read first, "By faith, Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child;* and they were not afraid of the king's commandment." It is a great blessing to be born of faithful parents. Moses' parents seem to have had some faith in God, since they were not afraid of the king's commandment. They seem also to have recognized in the child some divine call, and therefore determined to keep him alive. But the risk became too great, and at last they placed the child in the ark, which represents in a sense the Lord Jesus Christ as the place of safety in the hour of death and destruction. From this ark the child was "drawn out," and made the son of Pharaoh's daughter. From that moment Moses becomes the drawn-out one. He is taken from the place of destruction, and is committed to the care of his mother who rears him to have some knowledge of God. At length he is taken into the court of Pharaoh, and becomes heir to the throne, with opportunities peculiarly great, and privileges that the world

* Stephen uses the same expression (ἀστεῖος) concerning Moses in his speech before the High Priest when he says (Acts vii. 20), "In which time Moses was born, and was *exceeding fair*" (fair to God).

would consider most remarkable and enviable. He is brought up in the midst of the world with all its allurements, all its difficulties, all its temptations, all its demands, and all its terrible pressures. When he has come to full age, and has the power of choosing, he is suddenly called upon to exercise his free will. There comes a time in every man's career when he must exercise his free will, or he cannot hope to become a faithful servant of God.

The moment that Moses came to years of discretion we read that he "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." Take that as the starting-point of the life of service. If your circumstances are making it impossible for you to carry out what would otherwise be the will of God, then drop your circumstances as Moses did; it rests with you to do it. Refuse any longer to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. You have been in the courts of men, you have stood high in the favor of the people of this world, and your heirship may look exceedingly brilliant. You must choose whether you will take the heavenly inheritance or the earthly. There comes a point in every man's history when, if he wishes to be a sanctified vessel, meat for the Master's use, he must decide to drop everything that prevents a holy career, and a life of perfect service among the people of the Lord. This is the starting-point of the life of

true service, and it is vain to talk about Christian privileges and Christian prospects as the lawful inheritance of every believer while you refuse to obey God's call to come out from Pharaoh's court. Americans say that they own no king. I wish that none of them did. King Money, King Fashion, King Society, King Circumstances rule millions of God's people and keep them back from their holy calling, as the court of Pharaoh might have kept Moses from obeying the call of God. Brethren, if you have not already done so you must come to a solemn decision and say, "I, by the grace of God, refuse from this moment to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;" you must turn your back on the fashions, the customs, the honors of the world, and determinedly take your stand against that which keeps you from fully obeying the call of God.

We see the next stage pictured in that Moses chose rather "to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." If you are Pharaoh's daughter's son by adoption, if the world has taken you into its bosom and has said, "Come, live with me and enjoy the pleasures that I have to offer," no one denies that it is very pleasant for a season. Would the devil be what he is if he did not gild his bullets, and if he did not find something to boast of to offset the glorious attractions of

heaven? Of course, Pharaoh's court with all its grandeur, its learning, its talent, its science, its magnificent prospects and possibilities and power attracts men, and they are drawn into its snare. The half and half man says, "See what I can do if I stay where I am. When I become king over Israel, see what I can do for God's people." "Thou fool! this night thy soul shall be required of thee, and then whose shall these things be?" Who told you that the opportunity would be sufficient for the purpose, or that you would have strength to use it? The call of God is upon you, and you must first of all exercise your free will, and then you must have your heart stirred; you must be attracted by God's people in their present humiliation and distress. This weighs against the attractions of the world, because you see what is coming by trusting the Lord. It is not enough to say, "I am 'drawn out,' and I thank God for the ark that saved me from destruction in the river of death. I want no more, I am God's man." You must choose whether you will share the afflictions of God's people rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. The late Bishop Roland Hill, a witty Irishman, once said to me: "Brother Peploe, I long to preach to all London one sermon before I die." "What do you mean?" I asked. "I have only one sermon," he replied, "that I want to preach to all

London, to Belgravia, and that part where fashion reigns." "What will be your text?" "The Pleasures of Sin for a Season," he answered; "I would carry them through a London season, and show them the pleasures of sin for a London season." I once heard of a man who preached to a tremendous audience of the most fashionable people in London, taking his text from the 46th Psalm: "Be still and know that I am God." He said: "'Be still!' What a satire upon the world of fashion!—Be still! God says it to you people of fashionable society, and what do you do to be still?—rise with a jaded brow, a sickly tongue, and a weary stomach at twelve o'clock in the day, and go out to the Row,* and from the Row to luncheon, from luncheon for a drive, from the drive to tea, from tea to dinner, from dinner to the theater, from the theater to the ball, and from the ball you come home at three o'clock in the morning sick, weary, broken-hearted and distressed; and God says to the weary world of fashion, 'Be still, and know that I am God.' My God, what a satire upon religion!"

The pleasure of sin may seem very great to you when you are young, but what will be the end? Who is the most successful in this world? Is it not the man who, at the outset of his

* Rotten Row, the fashionable drive in Hyde Park.

career, calculates what will be the most propitious method of speculation or action? Men like Pears, who spent £137,000 ($685,000) in advertisements of soap in one year, are generally the men who succeed the best, because they give up the present for the sake of the future. Why is it that men and women who desire to succeed in this world are considered wise if they make a sacrifice now for the sake of the future, while the man of God alone is expected to make no sacrifice and no preparation in spiritual speculation, based upon good calculations of course, for the future?

Moses refused first; there is the exercise of will. He chose; there is the exercise of affection; he felt that it would be better to cast his lot with the people of God. Now he goes one step further and does what you and I must do: "Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." I am not ashamed to calculate, and to be ambitious in the spiritual domain. Moses, the servant of God, calculated well, and he concluded that it would be better to endure the reproach of Christ than to have all the treasures of Egypt. Put the two side by side, the things of the world in one scale-pan, and the things of God in the other, and see which kicks the beam. Make your calculation and say deliberately, "I esteem the

reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of the world." We never thought, perhaps, that Moses had anything to do with Christ. We read that Abraham saw Christ's day and was glad, and now we find that Moses, too, saw Christ's day. I humbly think that Moses saw Christ when he said (Deut. xviii. 15), "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken." He must also have seen Christ in the court of Pharaoh somewhere, for he actually could calculate everything, and say, "This is better for me." You say it is selfish, but that matters not; it is better for you and for the world, if you only will come to this conclusion, that the reproach of Christ is greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt. When a man has settled those three things, his will, his affection, and his reason, all bring him to the conclusion that he would better give up anything that hinders his soul, and join himself to the people of the Lord, and take the reproach of Christ. Then he is well started toward the glory of the future inheritance.

Now follow Moses, the servant of God, in the second stage of his life. When he has left the court of Pharaoh to join himself to the children of Israel, God mysteriously interferes and does not let him become a leader in his own strength. Many men think "I will go back and be a leader,"

and Moses tried to avenge the children of Israel by his own power, and smote the Egyptian. God says to him, "You retire; none of that killing;" and sends him away for forty years. "By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible." It took forty years for Moses to have his eyes opened to see Him who is invisible. It may take a long time for you to be brought to see God as he may be seen by the pure in heart, the faithful in spirit, the holy in purpose, and the consecrated in life. Forty years God had to deal with Moses near Horeb, the mountain of God's holiness. Moses had to live there as a mere shepherd in the wilderness, that he might be taught in God's school. Men do not excel to-day, because, after their conversion, they do not go apart, like Moses and Paul, into Horeb or Arabia for a season. Young Christians must go into Arabia. Book learning will never make preachers. You must get away alone with God and his Holy Word, and let God speak to you until your eyes are opened. Then you will see the burning bush, the majesty of God, and it will make you take off your shoes, for you will see that the ground whereon you stand is holy. Then only will God call you to be a delivered man and a deliverer.

After forty years of schooling by God, Moses still shrinks back from being a mere servant.

In seven ways he sought to evade the holy call of God. It is one thing to go out and be alone with God, it is quite another thing to be willing to be the servant of others. When Moses, by faith has learned to endure, seeing Him who is invisible, only then does God call him to go down into Egypt, back into the world, the place of temptation and peril. He is fitted now. When God has truly consecrated him and has given him power both with the mouth and in spirit to utter the will and the purposes of God, God sends him into Egypt to announce to the children of Israel God's holy plan of salvation.

Notice the plan of salvation which Moses was to announce. It is the only plan of salvation that is scorned to-day, it is the passover, the blood of the Lamb that must be put upon the doorpost, the redemption from God's wrath by a sacrifice, and then the feeding upon the Lamb which God has provided in order that the soul may be fitted for the journey that lies before it. This is the doctrine which we must preach as much as Moses had to preach it, that the people of Israel might be redeemed through God's hand, but through Moses' mouth—the doctrine of the paschal lamb. Whenever a man begins God's service among the degraded slaves who are held in bondage by Egypt, he must preach salvation obtained through God's right

hand of power by blood, and by the feeding upon the lamb. Moses does this through faith. "Through faith, he kept the passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them." Salvation is wont to lead to service and to service by which we seek to save.

There is one step further. By faith Moses led them "through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians essaying to do, were drowned." This is the great way in which the man becomes the leader. First, he only preaches for himself and his neighbors, that they must use the lamb; but when he has taught them the doctrine of deliverance and salvation, then, in passing through the Red Sea, which is the place of death, and coming out on the other side with the whole church of God, the man must be their leader. We who profess to serve God must become leaders to draw the people forward into true spiritual baptism out of the land of bondage up to the Mount of God, and into the land of Canaan. And Moses should have led the people all the way into Canaan.

See why Moses failed to be what we are intended to be—leaders into the good land. One sin in that wilderness life prevented Moses from taking the people into the blessed land of possession and power—an awful sin, but only one. The meekest man that ever lived lost his temper once,

because they provoked him so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips, and then he dared to strike the rock, which God had already told him once to strike, and only once. The law strikes Christ, who is our Rock, once, and the waters of life flow out of the rock; strike it again on account of temper, and you crucify the Son of God afresh and put him to open shame. Moses by striking the rock a second time falsifies the types, and God therefore punishes him. Smiting twice brings sin upon the actor; and for that act Moses was never admitted into Canaan. It is very touching to hear Moses pleading with God to be allowed to enter Canaan, until at last the Lord says, "It must suffice thee to see it from afar; speak no more." As the representative of the law I suppose that God was obliged to deal solemnly, judiciously, even supernaturally with him, where he would not deal so with any other of his children or his servants.

If you have taken Moses as the pattern of the way in which we should begin to be the servants of God, then calculate and decide whether or not Moses was a wise speculator in his choice; decide whether you would be wise in making the same choice. First you must become voluntary slaves; you must refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter and must go out to the children of Israel; you must pass perhaps a third of your life with God, and then you may be called to lead

the people into the goodly land. Was Moses a wise speculator? He was obliged to give up home, family ties, pleasures, prospects, privileges, all connected with the earth and with human life.

If ever a man on earth longed for a home in the earthly sense, I suppose that Moses did. For eighty years he was nothing but a wanderer—forty years caring for Jethro's sheep, and forty years in the wilderness with the people he was allowed to lead out of Egypt. Eighty out of the one hundred and twenty years of his life that man never had an earthly home. Now the ninetieth Psalm is called the Psalm of Moses, "the prayer of Moses, the man of God." What does he say? "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations." You have a home, but it may be burned to-night. You have a tabernacle which you think is very beautiful, but the wind or the flood may crush it down. But take Moses' home. "Lord, *thou* hast been our dwelling-place in all generations." The man is at home in the Lord; he is like that man of whom we read "His soul shall lodge in goodness" (Psalm xxv. 13). Moses lodged in goodness—cheap lodging, well furnished, always ready, plenty of accommodations for all friends who may come in. The Lord will send you such servitors as you never dreamed of having to wait on you; they shall be angels. I suppose that Moses never lacked servants; his soul lodged

in goodness, and the Lord was his dwelling-place, though he was one of the humblest of men. You like the prospect, and you say, "I should like to be the blessed means of leading men to know the Lord, and being a deliverer for those who are in bondage, but I should have to give up so much," or you say, "I am, like Moses, an infirm man, I shall loose my temper, I shall never get into the land." Brethren, God is love, God is love. God kept Moses out of Canaan. Did he? Yes, in the flesh; but did he always keep Moses out of Canaan?

Fifteen hundred years after Moses lost the inheritance of the earthly Canaan, into which he had so longed to enter, four men from a village in Galilee are seen walking up a mountain-side one evening at sunset. When they reached the top of the mountain at midnight, suddenly a light from Heaven shines upon the face of one of their number, and he is illumined beyond anything man had ever seen or heard of; his garments become whiter than any fuller on earth ever whitened them, and the glory of the Lord is seen around the four. The peasants of Galilee fall to the ground in amazement at the vision, and when they open their eyes, by the side of him who is so beautifully illumined they see two forms, one of whom is Moses, and the other Elias. Moses has at last entered into Canaan; he is in the very land of God's promise, the land of possession and

privilege, and he may be said to occupy a position of dignity and honor above all men that ever lived, for he is cheering the Son of God in the face of his coming death as the Saviour of the world. O gracious, O wonderful father, O tender friend to the fallen sinner, and yet a saint. When Moses pleaded, God said, "No, it may not be," but 1500 years afterward he sends Moses into Canaan to comfort Immanuel, who would die for us sinners. Did Moses make a good calculation? Consider whether it is worth your while to be out and out for Christ, or whether you are going to be one of those miserable "half-and-halfers," trying to hold on to your treasures and pleasures of Egypt.

A lady—and sometimes a man, too—says, "I cannot give them up," flashing her diamonds in the light. Men, what about your cigars and your drinks? What about your home comforts and your pleasures? I do not say that diamonds are wicked; God made them; but those beautiful things in the palace of Egypt, though there may be nothing wicked in them, are an allurement of the flesh. You must choose. Will you esteem most the reproach of Christ and calculate for the future 1500 years hence?

One step further. There is eternity, the everlasting home above, and the sea of glory before the throne of God. Of all that saints on earth have ever envied, I suppose that they have

envied most those who fall with their harps before God, and sing in the glory of his presence, "Holy, holy, holy." But, brethren, there is one man and only one who ever composed a song upon earth which we are told is to be sung in heaven by the redeemed and the glorified. We read in Revelation xv. 2: "I saw as it were a sea of glass, mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." Was he a good calculator? He makes one hymn, and it is sung before God in the fields of glory by all who have gained the victory here below as martyrs.

Christian friends, are you and I drawn out, drawn out for God's purposes to be fulfilled? Choose ye whom ye will serve. God help you to say like Joshua, the typical fulfiller of the true Jesus' purposes, and the man that had to take Moses' place, because of Moses' one sin; say from the depths of your heart: "With body, soul, and spirit all, 'As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.'"

THE FAITHFUL LORD.

"Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; a blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day: and a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known."—*Deut. xi.* 26–28.

Some five hundred years after these words were spoken by Moses, the Lord God gave utterance through his prophet to a wondrous Psalm in which we read these words, "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Psalms xcv. 7, 8). That Psalm teaches us that God could not give his people rest because they had not sufficient faith in him. In the third and fourth chapters of Hebrews which treat of the rest of God, we find the same cry going up, "*To-day*, if ye will hear his voice." In that fourth chapter of Hebrews, we are told that Jesus (Joshua) did not give the people full rest—a very remarkable sentence. It would appear at first sight as if that were a contradiction to the facts which are so frequently detailed in the earlier

part of Israel's history, namely, that God did give the people rest through Joshua. I hope to show, however, that these doubts as to God's faithfulness or seeming contradictions have no foundation in fact. I desire now to point out clearly what ought to lie before you, and what ought not to lie before you, in your endeavor to enter God's land of possession and peace. If you will follow God's guidance, take the warnings given in the Old Testament Scriptures.

Three great figures that stand out prominently in the history of Israel may be combined to symbolize the person of Jesus Christ—Moses, Aaron, and Joshua; Moses, as the great deliverer and lawgiver, resembling Jesus in his preliminary work for us; Aaron as intermediary between God and man, representing in his high-priestly character the functions of Christ for the true believer in reference to God; and Joshua, as exhibiting the great characteristics of our Lord as our leader, our conqueror, in whom we prevail at every point, and through whom we were intended to have all the blessings that God desires his people to enjoy upon earth. Moses is simply a type of Christ in his relation to one part of man's soul, Aaron in relation to another part, and Joshua in a third part, and each type needs to be expanded and exalted at every point.

It is when Moses is dead, that Joshua comes to the front as the leader of Israel into the land

of possession and of privilege. But before Moses is taken away, he speaks the remarkable words found in this eleventh chapter of Deuteronomy. Seven times over in this chapter Moses, the type of Jesus our deliverer, our lawgiver, our instructor from God, says to the children of Israel, "You are going into the land to possess it." It is no use going into the land, brethren, unless you are prepared to *possess it* afterwards. It is one thing for God to give you the land, it is another thing for you to go in and possess it. It is one thing for Moses to stand upon Mount Pisgah and look at the land, it is another thing for the people to go in and enjoy it. He yearned to enjoy it but he could not, simply because of that one sin. His experience is typical of the fact that neither deliverer nor lawgiver is sufficient for man's full salvation; even the high priest is not sufficient, for he, too, died in the wilderness. To enter the land we must have a conqueror, the Captain of our salvation, to take us in. We must obey his commandments which are the same as those of Moses. It will not suffice to acknowledge that there is a perfect law, and say that it is too holy for me. I must follow my Captain, and enter through him. The Captain brings us the same ten commandments, the same revelation of the holiness of God, the same demands upon character and conduct as Moses brought when he came down

from Sinai with the tables of stone. We cannot escape from God if we wish victory and peace. We shall never go to heaven unless we are ready to live with God here on earth. Israel failed because they did not bow every faculty in continual submission to God's holy commandments. They took spasmodically the revelation of God's will and tried to live up to it for a few moments, but they went back to the carnal appetites of the flesh, and did not serve God all the days of their life.

When the Lord Jesus Christ sent the Holy Ghost from heaven, he told the disciples that the Holy Spirit would come to convince (or convict) men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. I humbly believe that the convicting work of the Holy Ghost is as needful a prelude to the spiritual enjoyment of believers, as it is for the world at large before its peace is made with God through the blood of the Lamb. Before the Holy Spirit can guide Christians into all truth, he must come to them individually, and convict them in the sense that he tells them of whatever is still wrong in their lives, which keeps them from enjoying the full blessing of God. We are to pass judgment upon the god of this world—no longer the prince—as well as upon ourselves. Then the Holy Ghost will guide us into all truth, and make us able to enter the green pastures of God's love, the rich

mountains of God's provision, and the grand cities which God has prepared for us to inhabit and enjoy. My brother, "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Pray God that you may not be kept from entering into the enjoyment of God's blessings because of unbelief.

In the words which Moses speaks to the children of Israel just before he was taken from them, he speaks of "the days of heaven upon earth" (Deuteronomy xi. 21), as representing the enjoyment which Israel should know if they would only go in and possess the land, and obey the Lord. Pause now, as it were, at the gate of that land, on the east of Jordan, while the ark, having entered the stream of life—not death—stands waiting until all Israel shall have passed over and entered into the good land to take possession. The Red Sea, as the water of salt, typifies death; the Jordan is a living stream rushing down from above, and we are waiting our turn to go through it, past the ark, into the good land. Brethren, what are you expecting? Let us notice briefly what God intended that land of Canaan to be to his people.

The Lord told Joshua of three things which the people should have when they crossed Jordan. First, he promised them the land, *possession*, when he says (Joshua i. 2): "Moses, my servant, is dead; now, therefore, arise, go over

this Jordan, thou and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast."

In the second place he promised them *victory* (verse 5), "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee; I will not fail thee nor forsake thee."

The third blessing promised was *rest* (verse 15). "Until the Lord have given your brethren rest as he hath given you, and they also have possessed the land which the Lord your God giveth them: then ye shall return unto the land of your possession and enjoy it, which Moses, the Lord's servant, gave you on this side of Jordan, toward the sun rising."

These three blessings sum up the life of holiness, the life of privilege, the life of power, the life of peace, to which the Lord calls you. From this day forth you are to know the perpetual enjoyment of a possession which opens out before your soul's eye broader and grander every day. Our possession is the unsearchable riches of Christ. Secondly, you are to know unceasing

victory, with never an enemy that shall conquer you again. As St. Paul says in the eighth of Romans, "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." Thirdly, the rest and calm of soul, the enjoyment of spirit is never to be interrupted. You say, "Impossible!" Then, my brethren, it will be impossible. Israel entered not in through unbelief, and you will fail through unbelief just in proportion as you doubt your God.

Moses saw beforehand that the children of Israel were to have the opportunity to enjoy these privileges. He says, first (Deut. xi. 22–24), "If ye shall diligently keep all these commandments, the Lord will drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall possess greater nations and mightier than yourselves. Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours; from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea shall your coast be." Secondly, he says (verse 25), "There shall no man be able to stand before you; for the Lord God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon as he hath said unto you." And thirdly (xii. 9), he says, "Ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you." Here again we have the threefold promise, the land, victory, and rest.

The question for us is: Did this promise ever come to pass, and how far can we enjoy it? These same promises are given to Joshua (Joshua i.) as the blessings which he and his people should enjoy, so far as they trusted and obeyed the Lord, and later on in the history (Joshua xxi. 43–45), we find the remarkable statement: "And the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which he sware to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he sware unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass." There again is land, rest, and victory. Then when Joshua is making his dying speech to the people, he says (Joshua xxiii. 14): "Ye know . . . that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spoke concerning you." *

*Putting these statements from the twenty-first and twenty-third chapters side by side with the facts recorded in the other parts of Joshua and Judges, I should be tempted, at first, like the "higher critics" of the day, to see discrepancies between one passage and another, and to wonder if it does not prove that the book is a mere make-up from different writers, without any consideration of literary truth and literary justice, and therefore to be despised and thrown aside if we will. God says to Moses, "Tell them they shall have the land from the Euphrates to the Mediterranean; they shall have victory over every enemy, and they shall have perfect rest with undisturbed enjoyment of the comfort of life." Joshua at the close of his life says, "You

Let us turn to the facts and see first of all, if the children of Israel ever did take possession of the land from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates. They have never possessed a fifth part of it to this day, though God promised Abraham that they should have it (Genesis xv. 18), promised Moses that they should have it (Deuteronomy xi. 23), and records the same promise in Joshua xxi. 4. Yet Joshua says that there has not one thing failed of all that was promised—land, victory, and rest. What is the solution of the mystery?

In the eleventh chapter of Joshua (16–23) we read: "So Joshua took all that land, the hills and all the south country and all the land of Goshen, and the valley, and the plain, and the mountain of Israel, and the valley of the same; even from the mount Halak, that goeth up to Seir, even unto Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon under mount Hermon. . . . Joshua made war a long time with all those kings. There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon: all others they took in battle . . . that they

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have it all," and the historian says, "God gave them all these things—the land, rest, and victory over every enemy." Then I look at the contrary facts as the historian records them and say, Was the man a fool? Did he know what he said? He says that Moses told the children of Israel that they should have these three things, that Joshua says they had them, and he himself adds as if to confirm Joshua's words, "You have them all," and yet he tells us that they never really enjoyed any of them. The explanation of the seeming discrepancy is, however, not difficult as we shall see.

might have no favor, but that he might destroy them, as the Lord commanded Moses. . . . And the land rested from war." There are the same three things secured — land, victory, and rest.

But have they taken all the *land* when Joshua speaks to them? Look at xiii. 1. "Now, Joshua was old and stricken in years; and the Lord said unto him, thou art old and stricken in years, and there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed." There is land yet to be possessed; what about the people? "Nevertheless, the children of Israel expelled not the Geshurites, nor the Maachathites: but the Geshurites and the Maachathites dwell among the Israelites until this day" (xiii. 13). Those are the very people who should have been destroyed. The land is not fully possessed, the people are not fully taken, and who can say they have rest when we read (Heb. iv. 9) that "Jesus (Joshua) did not give them rest?"

Why, and how were they limited in the enjoyment of these promises? In the second chapter of Judges (ver. 7, 10) we see what happened to those people, for "The people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord that he did for Israel. . . . There arose another generation after them which knew not the Lord, nor yet the

works which he had done for Israel." Now we begin to see the explanation. God provided a Moses to bring Israel out of Egypt and to draw them to himself that they may be his people. God provided a Passover Lamb, the dying Saviour, to give you full deliverance, and you took it. The moment you claimed salvation God took you to Mount Sinai, and said, "Will you take my will?" Some of you turned back to perish in the wilderness. It took Israel forty years to do what they might have done in eleven days. Through the high priest many of you have communion and fellowship with the Lord, and are rejoicing in the ever-living Joshua, our Jesus, who says, "I will take you in." God through Christ opens a land of privilege and says, "Will you go in and possess it?" The moment you go in, instead of having to eat manna and to draw water from the rock, you find yourself in the possession of spiritual riches and privileges that transcend the utmost of your expectation. Some have known what it was to possess a part of the land, but how much have you? Only that on which the sole of your foot hath trod. You will never possess any more of Christ than you claim as your own. You do not gain God's blessing by storing away books full of notes; you must take God's truth into your very soul, and feast upon it. What good will abundance of food, or water or money do you, if it is unclaimed and unused? The

money that a man takes from the bank is his enjoyable possession, that which he has in the bank is only his lawful possession. You cannot pass through the riches of God except by the study of this blessed Book, and by constantly dealing with God in prayer. You must go as Abraham did upon the hill, and lift up your eyes and look northward and southward, and eastward and westward, and hear the living God say, "As long as you are not joined unto the doubtful man Lot, as long as you are not allied to the half-believer I give you the whole." Abraham enjoyed in Canaan every rod of land over which he walked. We read repeatedly in Genesis, that "The Canaanite and the Perizzite were then in the land" (xii. 7; xiii. 6). I used to be perplexed to know the meaning of that statement, but now I believe that I understand it. The Canaanite and the Perizzite were there as Abraham's enemy, to keep back his flocks and his herds from enjoying the pastures; but though they were in the land, Abraham walked through the length and breadth of it, and had free enjoyment of every camping ground at which he chose to stop, even though the Canaanite was there, because God was with him. The day is coming when the Jews shall possess that land, even to the Euphrates, and Israel must be saved and take possession. I honor the Rothschilds if, as I have heard, they said, that

they would never buy Canaan, because it was already their own. Brethren, do not try to buy what God has given you.

When I lived in Herefordshire, there was one very rich man in my parish, who had a sudden paralytic stroke while I was away from home for a holiday. He was a common ignorant farmer, and had come into eighty thousand pounds through the death of a brother. He had told me that he did not care for his brother's money, because he had as much as he wanted before, and yet he had not given more than sixpence a year for charity. As soon as I returned home I went down to see him and he said, "The Lord has stricken me and I am afraid I may die. I have sent for you at once that I may do what I suppose is right before God; I want to go to heaven, and I want you to take a hundred pounds for the poor." I looked him straight in the face, and said, "Do you think you are going to buy your soul's way to glory by a dirty hundred pounds! Give your money where you like, I will not touch it." That was rather strong; but blessed be God, the man lived seven years, and was a very different man before he died.

Take the land that God has given you. The Canaanites are there, but they cannot touch you. They always bowed down to Abraham and called him "my lord." Your enemies will do the same

to you as long as you put your trust in God, and claim the riches of Christ. Claim a perpetually holy life that shall know no interruption; claim power to carry out the character of Christ before the world, and let them see that you have a glorious dignity, a holy privilege, and a mighty power.

The children of Israel possessed just so much of that land as they put their foot upon and no more; therefore, when Joshua came to die he looked around and said, "We have had great possessions given us from the Lord, but you must not rest here; there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed." It is the same with us.

"Have you on the Lord believed?
Still there's more to follow."

Yes, always more; the Lord is ready to give you mighty treasures in the land of privilege when you put your trust in him.

The children of Israel were told in the second place that they should have *victory* over all their enemies. Was this ever completely fulfilled? Jericho's walls fell down, but a few days after ward miserable little Ai, with its twelve thousand people, was able to beat back all the tribes of Israel. There was an accursed thing in the camp! God cannot bless and give the victory so long as you allow one damnable thing in you. You ask

"What is a damnable thing? I have my little infirmities, I am very fond of my little money-bag, my Babylonish garments, but what is the harm?" Brethren, there will be no victory while you set your heart on these accursed things. There is no harm in the Babylonish garment in itself, but it is stealing the heart and damning your soul. You must deal with God. If you set your hearts upon his commandments to keep them, then the Lord shall give you the victory; but no more of victory than you have a clear conscience, and have offered yourself a whole-hearted sacrifice unto God. Stone the accursed thing and victory will be yours. "Up, wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face," there is an accursed thing in the camp. Israel took only a fifth of the land. How much did they conquer of the people? One of the most pitiful arithmetical progressions I ever read is from the thirteenth chapter of Joshua through the book of Judges; especially in the book of Judges where we read that they began to take the land piece by piece. Judah first let the Jebusites stay in Jerusalem; next, they could not drive them out; then the Jebusites drive the children of Israel out; next, the children of Israel are in bondage and captivity to the very men whom they were to conquer; and then comes that life of ups and downs, the very picture of the greater part of the Christian church to-day. The Israelites have only dark-

ness and distress. God raises up an Othniel, and the land has peace for forty years. Then down they go again, and God raises up an Ehud, and they have peace for eighty years. Then there is bondage to Sisera and God gives them a Deborah. Here is a female vessel which is used of God. But down they go again, and so throughout the book of Judges you have the typical scene, the people of God in possession of the land with promised victory over every foe, but up and down, up and down, though we read of forty years' rest, and eighty years' rest, yet they are again brought into captivity under their enemies. Why? Because they never trust the Lord, because they never go forward, because they are never loyal. Those are the people who say that they have all the land in possession, and are to have victory over every foe.

Thirdly, the Lord promised them *rest*, and Joshua could say that the Lord had given them the land, and victory, and rest round about; but rest from how many of their enemies? They had conquered thirty-one kings, but there remained yet to be thorns in their side, many of the nations which they ought to have overthrown. The land had no rest, because they never fully trusted the LORD their God. That is the case with multitudes to-day who call themselves Christians. The Lord never broke his word.

Israel had all the privileges that they could take; so you will have. When I see a man or woman excited at a conference and saying, "This is delightful, this is heavenly, this is grand; do just give me a text." Well, thank God, if *a* text helps you, but you will never get any more than you put your foot upon and claim of this Bible. Do you suppose because a man dishes up a few of God's truths for you by the teaching of the Holy Ghost, that you have the whole of the land? Brethren, we only give you a key; go in and you will have all the pomegranates, and all the corn, and grapes, and the treasures of brass, iron, and stone for your own; but you must walk for them.* You must walk all through the land and take possession of it, then you must drive out your enemies. What did St. Paul mean when he said to the Ephesians, "Let not, let not, let not?" That one expression goes all through the passage. In the sixth chapter he tells us that there are enemies who are seeking to drive us out, to bind God's people in their own land; the old enemies will rise up against you, who have taken their land, and they mean to take it away from you, and they will unless you have the grace of God to go forward courageously and fight the good fight of faith. When a soldier is

*So in the Epistle to the Ephesians the Apostle mentions the seven walks of the Christian.

placed upon guard he has to be more watchful than at any other time. It may be in darkness, and yet he has to be alive and earnest. You cannot claim these blessings which the Lord is prepared to give, except in the measure in which you are found both treading upon the land which God offers you, and watching and using the whole armor of God.

How far may rest be had? Just so far as I have perfect confidence in God. There is a difference between faith and faithfulness. Faith takes, and faithfulness carries out God's blessings in the individual's experience. I must be faithful unto death, if I am to have the crown of life. The Lord is asking us to trust him one step at a time, one moment at a time. The life we profess to live is a life of holy rest, a life filled instantaneously with all the grand possibilities which God offers in himself.

Israel have failed up to this very day because of their unbelief. Joshua says, "Not one thing hath failed of all that God promised," and that is true up to the extent that the people had carried out the commands and counsels of the living God. As far as you trust God you will find that he is giving you perpetual victory and enjoyment. The promise is as full as it can be even from the living God. The possession and enjoyment and power are full only so far as you trust him. There comes into your heart, perhaps,

a sense of shame, and, I hope, a willingness to confess that you have known so little, enjoyed so little, been victorious so little, and rested so little in the Lord in the days that are gone by. Christ is all in all for every need of man. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift; I have Christ, and shall not Christ have me? When people say, "I want more of the Holy Ghost," I answer, "The Holy Ghost wants more of you." The question is not, How much you can take in of the Spirit, but how much the Spirit can take possession of you. If you will yield yourself to the living God with the conviction that he is all that every man can want; not one good thing shall fail, any more than it has failed in the past, of all that the Lord our God hath promised.

STAND FAST.

"Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved."—*Phil. iv. 1.*

Holiness must be carefully distinguished from righteousness. They are closely allied, for one is the fruit of the other; yet holiness is not really greater than righteousness, nor is righteousness greater than holiness. I think, however, that we are justified in speaking of holiness as a great advance upon righteousness in the sense that holiness must be the offspring of righteousness, and since no man can know what holiness is until by God's grace he is made partaker of "the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe." Righteousness, says Dr. Horatius Bonar,* is legal perfection; holiness is spiritual character. Holiness is an advance upon righteousness,† for righteousness is de-

* God's Way of Holiness.

† If this be true, it may puzzle some that we should read (Luke i. 74-75) that we are to be delivered from the hand of our enemies, that we may "serve him in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life." There holiness is placed before righteousness, but this word for holiness is ὁσιότης,

clared to be a gift; while holiness is the manifestation of that righteousness in the life. We have no part whatever in obtaining the gift, but holiness is dependent upon the extent to which we accept Him who brings us righteousness, as a gift from God. No man will ever be made holy, as God requires that we should be holy, who has not gratefully accepted the gift from God, the gift which means to us perfect acquittal and perfect acceptance through the righteousness which God has provided in Christ. Remember that your acceptance before God depends in no sense whatever upon your own conduct or character. But also remember that for your fellowship with God and your final fruition in glory, everything depends upon your own character and conduct. While righteousness is a free gift to them that are utterly undeserving, holiness is the working out of that which God bestows, so that the credit must always be his in both cases.

The gift of righteousness then is Christ Jesus, the Lord, taking my place as a sinner, and giving me his place, as a saint. We are, therefore, accepted in the Beloved without credit, without effort of any kind; simply because by faith we

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whereas elsewhere, when we are enjoined to be holy, the word is ἁγιοσμός, ἁγιότης, or ἁγιωσύνη, the fruit. In Luke i. 74–75, we are simply called upon to be dedicated to God, and therefore are to be made righteous in our life, so that the righteousness of the law may be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. The holiness generally spoken of is the fruit of righteousness (Rom. vi. 22).

take what God bestows. Holiness, on the other hand, is won by the goodness of God. Christ reveals himself through the Holy Ghost, and deigns to work in me to enable me to do what God desires. The one is wrought for me, the other is wrought in me. Righteousness makes the vessel meat, holiness exhibits the extent to which it is used by the Lord himself. There must then not be righteousness only, but there must be holiness in every Christian man and woman because God demands it.

I wonder not that the scorning skeptic so often mocks at the Christian, because he says that they cowardly cringe at the foot of the cross, ready to take God's gift like a sneak, but show nothing as a fruit of that blessed gift. Remember that God demands, and where God demands he enables, and where God enables, he expects us to fulfill.

The Apostle Paul has been exhibiting this truth to the Christians at Philippi through the first three chapters of his Epistle. The Philippian Epistle differs much from the Ephesian Epistle, and from the Colossian Epistle, although all three were written during St. Paul's imprisonment at Rome. The Ephesian Epistle shows us what we are to God in Christ Jesus, and the Colossian Epistle what Christ is to us in the presence of God. But in the Philippian Epistle the Apostle speaks of what we

should be for God in the midst of our fellow-men, and what Christ is to be to us down here in our own every-day life with its duties, difficulties, temptations, and trials. God expects great things of us, brethren; the world and the devil expect great things of us. The devil is watching to see what the grace of God can do in the Church, and the devil's one design is to overthrow and defeat the grand purposes of God with regard to His redeemed ones. The great work of the world is to scorn the Christian if they can. The great work of God is to bring about such fruit of holiness in the Christian church that while the world hates, and the devil abhors, both shall be compelled to marvel at the wondrous workings of God.

Are you prepared to let the works of God be carried out in you? To be a perfect astonishment to both the good and the evil principalities and powers in the heavenlies? St. Paul says that we are saved to be the manifestation of the manifold wisdom of God to all those wondrous beings above.

The Apostle is calling upon the Philippians to exhibit Christ in their daily life, and at the beginning of the fourth chapter he has just solved his own problem with regard to the church of God, and its provision, and he now writes that one word which is the turning point from the doctrinal to the experimental in nearly every

one of his Epistles, and he says, "*Therefore*, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so steadfast in the Lord, my dearly beloved."

"Therefore," why? Because of the provision of righteousness in Christ spoken of in the third chapter; because of that humiliation of Christ which brought salvation, spoken of in the second chapter; because of that glorious comfort and love which is in Christ Jesus, spoken of originally in the first chapter.

Thus we see first (chapter iii.), that St. Paul puts himself forward as an illustration of what Christ would do in providing a righteousness for which they aspire; and this aspiration, which was to him an obligation, lifted the Apostle to the one insatiable ambition, to be conformed to the image of Christ, his glorious Saviour and perfect example; to come close to Christ, his beloved friend; to be accepted of Christ in the day of reward. He was looking forward to obtaining crowns, as a runner in the race, and he writes to those Philippians whom he loved, and says, "O ye Philippians, be my crown!"

I think that the minister of the Gospel is separated to be a winner of crowns. I cannot tell how God gives power to the poor weak body and the feeble mind, and the helpless soul, but then I think that it is all by his grace, by his love, that he gives, as it were, an impulse to the soul

which enables the body and strengthens even the mind; because one looks forward to that blessed day when the people to whom one has ministered will be one's own crown. Do you not think that that gives support in the hour of weakness, and failure, and depression? Oh, try it, try it, you Christians who have never yet won a soul to hand up as a jewel in the crown the Lord is going to give you; try what it is to see the bright joy, to hear the redeemed one sing, to realize that God for Christ's sake has accepted him as a saved one.

But St. Paul also says to the Philippians (ii. 1, 2), "If there is any comfort, any power in Christ, O beloved, 'fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded;'" that ye carry on the same blessed privileges which I have had, seeking for souls and serving the Lord. In the first chapter he says that he can think of them perpetually with joy, remembering them always in his prayers; he understands their loving and faithful and holy life, and he blesses God that it is given to them as to him to suffer for Christ as well as to believe on him.

The epistle begins with exhortations to holiness, and St. Paul comes back to that again in the beginning of the fourth chapter, and says that he cannot be content either for himself or for his beloved that there should be nothing but the gift of righteousness. It is a blessed gift, a

glorious gift, and the starting-point of everything that is perfect in man, but it is not sufficient that you should be accepted in the righteousness of Christ Jesus; God Almighty has been pleased to redeem you, that you may win Christ in all his fullness.

Listen to this appeal from the throne and from the cross; an appeal from the cross that says to the sinner, take the gift and bless God with your whole being; then speaks from the throne and says to the saint, take the perfect work, ye that have been redeemed and are sanctified, and set apart for the Master's glory. You will never be satisfied until by the grace of God you are enabled to show that Jesus Christ can keep his saints standing fast in the Lord.

We must recognize at the outset that everything depends upon being "in the Lord"—an old and familiar, but a beautiful truth that every saint of God delights to dwell upon. It would be wearisome if I were to pass through even this one Epistle and show how frequently St. Paul uses that one little preposition "in." I will only call attention to how repeatedly the Apostle brings this forward in chapter four as indicating not merely the sphere in which we are saved, or our place of blessing in the heavenlies, but as the seed from which holiness springs. By holiness I do not mean merely "set apart"

for God, as I understand the word in Luke i. 75, but a process carried on by God the Holy Ghost, through which I am being changed from glory to glory, into the image of Christ. Through holiness I am being satisfied moment by moment, comforted in trial, enabled in my dealings with my neighbor, not to be subject to bitterness, wrath, clamor, or evil speaking, however provoking the circumstances of life may be. By holiness, in fact, I understand that beautiful land of Canaan, into which God introduces the true believer, and where he gives him possession, and power, and peace; possession, so that he has all things (I. Corinthians iii. 22); power, so that he can meet every difficulty and every duty, be more than conqueror through Christ (Romans viii. 37); and peace, not only with God, but having the peace of God ruling uninterruptedly in his heart (Colossians iii. 15).

"In Christ," then, is not a mere position of safety, but is a condition from which springs the power for carrying out God's demand for holiness. Eight times in this fourth chapter (verses 1, 2, 4, 7, 10, 13, 19 and 21) does the Apostle bring out this blessed truth that in Christ Jesus the Lord, there is marvelous power for all who really desire to stand fast, because of their having received the Son's provisions for holiness. (1) "*Stand fast in the Lord.*" (2) "I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche that they be

of *the same mind in the Lord.*" (3) "*Rejoice in the Lord always;* and again I say, Rejoice." In the beginning of the third chapter he wrote: "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord." It seems as if he could not get over the occasion for rejoicing, yet this man was writing from prison as Paul the aged, now the prisoner of the Lord, expecting martyrdom at any moment; yet, not less than sixteen times does the man speak in this one little Epistle about joy. Wherein is St. Paul different from you and me in possibilities? Eleven times in the Epistle he brings out the words *τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖν*, "to be of the same mind," as if that was the exultation that springs from the gift of joy. He says, "My beloved brethren, you must have this mind, and if you take the gift and gain the blessing of rejoicing in the Lord always, you will then have the mind that was in Christ Jesus. When joy seems an impossibility to you, it is because you have not learned that mind. Our blessed Master never to our knowledge spoke of joy until the agony of death was upon him. Is not that wonderful? True, it is said that he "rejoiced in spirit" (Luke x. 21), but it was not until the night before he died when he began to feel the agonies of death that Jesus began to speak of joy. What a lesson to us! The very times when we are overwhelmed with affliction and trial and the burdens of life, are the times when the

Gospel of Christ was meant to bring us joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Again (verse 7) Paul says (4) "*The peace of God . . . shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus;*" and (5) "*I rejoiced in the Lord greatly* that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again" (verse 10). Fancy a man rejoicing in the Lord because he has just received a bit of money from the Philippian church. People sometimes think that they cannot give any pleasure to the great men of God. A little gift goes a long way, if the heart goes with the gift. (6) "*I can do all things in Christ who strengtheneth me*" (verse 13). Can you take up those words and say, "I am all-prevailing in Him that strengtheneth me." (7) "*My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus*" (verse 19). St. Paul cannot get over the fact that he has such a Lord to provide for him. Then he seems to say (8) "Now let everyone take the blessing—'*Salute every saint in Christ Jesus*'" (verse 21).

This is not a mere tricky repetition of a number of verses. They show that a man in much darker circumstances than you are could still look into the face of the Lord Jesus, and recognize that Christ Jesus was looking into his face, and could say, "I have all and abound; everything is mine, and everything is yours in Christ

Jesus." Never forget that while you have righteousness in Christ Jesus you have also a glorious tower. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe." Why does the Psalmist so frequently speak of the Lord as a rock, a fortress? It is because he says, "There my strength is supplied in abundance." Everything that is required by the soul is found in Christ Jesus. When we are in Christ Jesus, there comes the power of the Holy Ghost which works through us to energize us for the glory of God.

Now it is that the Apostle can say, "So stand fast in the Lord." I think that that word "so" refers, first, to the provisions of God in Christ as our source of strength, and, secondly, refers to St. Paul as an example of steadfastness. Perhaps Christ would seem too high a standard, but surely all can be something like Paul, the aged, the prisoner at Rome (cf. i. 30, iii. 17, and iv. 9). He names Christ as the fountain, Paul as a pattern, the Holy Ghost as the power, and man as the medium.

Now, take your privilege, and no longer dare to vilify Christ in the eyes of the world by saying, "I cannot." No one ever said *you* could. Take your prepared place, and say once for all, "I cannot; but Christ can." As one young man said, "Formerly, my highest wish was to be a manly Christian; now, I have come to desire to

be a Christly man, a man taken possession of by Christ." It is true that you take possession of Christ here for acceptance and salvation, but to win a crown, Christ must take possession of you.

Two little boys are walking along the road with their father. One grasps hold of his father's fingers, and finds that it is about all that he can manage. The other puts his hand right into his father's large strong hand, and the father holds it. Suddenly they come to a ditch in the road. Both slip; the one who is holding his father's hand loses his grip and goes down; the other is held up firmly by the father's strong grasp. You do the trusting, and let God do the keeping, and you will go safe through life and enter into glory. "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation" (Peter i. 5). Let that be your law of life in everything.

Brethren, we have our possession in the Lord, and we have our power and pattern in the Word. The life that we are to live as Christians is expressed in these words "*Stand fast*" (*τήκετε*, stand). Let me call your attention to seven passages from God's Holy Word which show what will be our life if we stand fast in the Lord. The first is I. Corinthians xvi. 13, "Watch ye, *stand fast in the faith.*" Let no man shake your faith in the great doctrines of the Gospel. Be perfectly clear as to the scheme of salvation, that doctrine of the blood, that doctrine of the atone-

ment, that doctrine of burial by baptism, the doctrine of the resurrection in Christ, the doctrine of the Holy Ghost coming to take possession and make you most powerful, the doctrine of salvation, satisfaction, and sanctification. Critics, however, will never get so high as the top of Christ's spire, the top-stone of which is GRACE. It is the spire that touches God's throne from which the grace of God flows to the very bottom of the building.

Again (Galatians v. 1), "*Stand fast in the liberty* wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Do not be entangled again with bonds, either of the critics or of the poor superstitious ceremonialists. Stand fast in Christ's liberty. Ye are the sons of God, taught by the Spirit to cry, "Abba, Father." If I have liberty to go into my Father's own sanctum, and to speak to him of my affairs, and get money, counsel, strength, and wisdom, need I go into the bondage of superstition and bow down to a human priest with my confessions? But liberty means not only liberty from superstition and ceremonialism, but liberty from the corruption of the flesh, for we are to walk in the spirit and not to fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

Then, thirdly (Ephesians vi. 11–14), "Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we

wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."—"*Stand fast therefore*" *in all the armor of God.* We are in the heavenlies to fight the devils and all the principalities and powers, who are trying to draw us out from our fortress where God has placed us. There can be no peace between us and the devil; we must fight him to the very end, because he is always assailing our souls and trying to draw us out of our high place in Christ Jesus. From the pit of darkness to the throne of God, Christ Jesus raises us, and putting us above all principalities and powers, says, "Having done all, stand." But mind that you take the *whole* armor of God; omit not one piece. The devil is crafty; let him see one spot without its covering, and he will hurl a fiery dart that will make you groan with pain, and would wound you unto death perhaps, were it not for the oil and wine which the Good Samaritan deigns to pour in.

Once again Paul says to the Philippians (i. 27) that he desires to hear that they "*stand fast in one spirit.*" Brethren, we should be in one spirit only, not magnifying "isms" and cults. We are in Christ, and blessed be God, the day

is coming when the little distinctions will be dropped.

There is a familiar story about John Wesley and others going to the river that bounds the Holy City, and finding to their astonishment that they had to drop their cloaks and garments in which they approached. One drops his cloak, another his robe, another his surplice, and they come out on the other side astonished to find that they are all in the same white beautiful robe, the robe of righteousness, which is Christ Jesus our Lord. Cannot we gain a little more of heaven upon earth by stretching out more of the right hand of fellowship? "Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind."

The next step is a very serious one. We are told that Epaphras was continually praying for the Colossians that they should "*stand fast, perfect and complete in all the will of God*" (Colossians iv. 12). We bow down and say, "Thy will be done;" and men put up the whites of their eyes and roll their heads about as if with agony at the thought that the will of God is to be done. One would think the will of God was the most terrible infliction that the Almighty could lay upon his creatures. But the will of God is the joy of Christ Jesus. It is the one joy of a sanctified soul that it is permitted and enabled to do the will of God; so that when a person prays for me that I may

"stand fast, perfect and complete in all the will of God," it is the most blessed prayer that can be offered for me.

Now II. Thessalonians ii. 15: "*Stand fast therefore in the traditions* which we have learned, whether by word or by our Epistle." Traditions? Certainly not what are called the traditions of Rome, but the teachings of the apostles, the Word of God. Stand fast in the Word of God. When men tempt you to turn aside into the pleasant pastures of what they call criticism; when they evoke scientific display and seek to reconcile science and theology by dabbling with both and retaining them both, turn to the Word of God and say, "The Word of God is revealed to me in order that I may stand fast in it, and that is sufficient for me."

Once more I. Peter v. 12: "Testifying that this is *the true grace of God wherein ye stand.*" This is the true grace of God; stand ye fast therein. As at the beginning, so at the close of our beautiful chain with seven links, we are brought back to that word *grace.* Never be moved from the grace of God; let that grace prevail. St. Paul says to the Corinthian church (II. Cor. vi. 1). "We beseech you, therefore, that ye receive not the grace of God in vain" (cf. viii. 9, ix. 9, xii. 9). Beloved, receive not the grace of God in vain. Your privilege is to stand

fast in the Lord, and that position brings power not in ourselves, but in the Holy Ghost, so that whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we may do it heartily (out of our souls) unto the Lord.

It is a beautiful life—standing fast in the faith, standing fast in the liberty, standing fast in the heavenlies, girt in the armor of God, standing fast in one spirit, standing fast in the will of God, standing fast in the traditions of the Word of God's revelation, and standing fast in the grace of God. Surely we cannot ask more, for these seven things comprise every possible want that can rise in our hearts and they are all supplied in Christ Jesus.

Twenty-one years ago I was permitted to conduct a ten-day Mission in a small town in England. It was the first which I had ever conducted, and the Lord was pleased to give abundant blessing. A little governess, a small, delicate, retiring young woman, came to know God and to rest in Christ, and when I came to London two years later she had just taken the position of governess in a large house which had a very large drinking saloon attached to it, so large that the proprietor paid eleven thousand pounds for the good-will beside six hundred pounds a year for the rent, simply to supply drink in the saloon, while his family occupied the upper floor. As soon as she heard that I was in the city she said to the people

of the house, "You must go and hear that man; he is a great friend of mine." She brought them to my church. The man was an infidel, but claimed to be an atheist.* He came to the church once, and that was enough for him; but his wife came, his daughters came, and to-day, after sixteen years, that woman and her children are some of my most devoted adherents.

The man turned away, but, after about a year, he was taken with a fearful attack of cancer in the bowels, and they said that he would certainly die. The governess persuaded the wife to send for me. I went to see the man, but had very little effect upon him the first day. I went the second day and the third, as I saw by the open blinds that he was not yet dead. At last, when I could not persuade him of the goodness of God by any doctrine, I told him this story. I said, "My friend, God wants you to take Jesus Christ as your Saviour to-day, and simply to say 'Thank you' for it." He said, "I cannot see that, and I don't see anything in the Gospel." He tried to listen, though he called himself an atheist. I said: "It reminds me of a story which I heard in Scotland. A gentleman was driving to see a large and beautiful

* Remember the difference between these: the skeptic is a man who is looking around; the infidel has no faith in Christ; the atheist is one without God. The skeptics are usually earnest people; infidels are fools perhaps, poor things; but atheists are rank fools, because they say that there is no God, when they know that there is.

palace, and when they stopped at the gates, he looked out of the carriage, and said to the driver, 'Drive on.' The driver answered, 'This is what we have come to see.' 'Go in then.' 'We cannot until the gate is opened.' 'Get it opened.' 'I cannot; it has to be opened from the inside.' 'Tell them to open it.' The driver replied, 'That is not it; the porter must come out and speak to you.' 'Fetch her out then.' A woman came out and the gentleman said, 'I wish to go in and see the palace.' 'Yes, sir, you are perfectly welcome; if you will only say "Thank you," I will unlock the gate.' 'Is that all? Thank you.' 'All right,' and she touched the latch, and the great gates swung open."

The man stopped me, put out his hand in anguish of pain, and touched my hand, and said, "Stop, sir, stop, stop, I see it. 'Thank you, Lord; thank you, Lord; thank you, Lord; thank you.'" I never saw such a look upon any human face, never, as there was upon that man's face when he entered the gate, having received the entrance for nothing but "Thank you."

You may say, "That is all very well; emotional excitement in the face of death." But what happened? The next day I came again, and I said, "I see he is not dead yet." "No." "How is he?" "Well, he has never slept

since you were here, but he has spent the whole night saying, 'Thank you, Lord,' ever since you left him." "Oh," I said, "I know what it means; he has just got inside the gates of the park, and he is looking at the palace, and he will be in the palace directly." That man lived six months; the cancer turned, but he never once left that room. Was the conversion real, was the thanksgiving true? The chief part of his trade was on Sunday. Without one word from me, a great notice was put up on the door the next Sunday,

> THIS HOUSE IS CLOSED ON SUNDAYS
>
> FROM THIS DAY FORTH,

signed by his name. That was the first fruit, and rather practical evidence. What, to lose his income? Yes, and trust his Lord. But besides this by the goodness of God, I saw during those six months no less than six open denominated atheists give their hearts to God in that room, one after the other, brought there by that man. See the remarkable change, all through this little governess. One of these atheists turned out to be a man, whom, in my youth, I had heard blaspheming God before a great crowd and saying, "How can there be any truth

in the Bible when the pages contradict themselves, one after the other. In one page it says, 'No man shall see my face and live,' and in another it says, 'Moses talked face to face with God.' That is a lying book."* I rushed into the crowd, and buttening up my coat, as if I was not a clergyman, I tried to speak to him. A gentleman came up to me and said, "Young man, you are too young for this work; I have followed this fellow for eight years, and you would better leave him alone." Seventeen years later this great strong man is on his knees waiting before God in the room of this dying publican. Brethren, enter God's inheritance with this one simple utterance, "Thank you, Lord; thank you."

Twenty-one years ago, I was called to London to speak for the first time at the Mildmay Conference, and I was staying with a superintendent of Mildmay. On the last day of the Conference he said to me, "I wish you would go into our little hospital, and see a dying woman." I said, "Could I help her? I would be glad if I could, but I am very busy." "Help her?" he said, "No, I meant her to help you." I said, "I wish very much that I could go in." He said, "Never mind, I will tell you. I have just been to see her. She has had a stroke this morning, and she must die to-night. She is a girl of eighteen,

* I need hardly say that a man may be face to face with one, and be blinded

and when I sat down by her, I was not sure whether they had told her that she was dying, so I felt a certain shyness in having to tell her. After a moment, she said, 'Have they told you about me?' 'Oh, yes, my child. Does it trouble you much?' There was such a look upon her face that it awed me. She said, 'Trouble me? trouble me? No, I am *so glad*, I am *so glad!*' The look was so wonderful that I felt awed again, and did not know how to speak, but I said, 'I see that they have taken all the beds out of your room, and have left you alone; does not that trouble you? Do you not mind being alone?' 'Mind it? mind it? No, I am so glad, because now'—never forget the words—'because now I have Him all to myself, and he is so real to me; is he not to you?'" Captain Martin said, "No, my child, he is not as real to me as he is to you; I wish to God that I felt what I can see in your face."

Brethren, He is the Christ from whom to learn what love is; he is a Christ by whom to live this life; he is a Christ with whom to go through death; he is a real Keeper, a Saviour, a Friend at the last, and he is a Christ to go and live with forever in the glory of God. Will you take my Christ, and my God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus?

THE DAILY PORTION.

"Unto every one that entereth into the house of the Lord, his daily portion for their service in their charges according to their courses . . . for in their set office they sanctified themselves in holiness."—*II. Chron. xxxi. 16, 18.*

If the heart is truly filled with love, there is but one thing apparently that can keep it in utter distress and that is the refusal of the loved one to apprehend the intensity of the lover's devotion, and his purpose to do good to the object of his affections. I know not what more can be told than you have already heard to express the infinite love of God, and to make you feel that the heart of the Eternal is most wondrously kind. The purposes of God towards his creatures are simply wrapped up in that one little word LOVE and he can never be satisfied in the one yearning desire of his heart, to pour out upon men his infinite treasures, if they will but take according to their need.

What would satisfy you in your religion, if you wrote out a catalogue of everything which you felt you could desire or above all that you could ask or think? Would you not write down

at the very beginning, "Peace with God, so that I should not be afraid of him?" You know in your hearts that that is supplied by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross. You have but to say, "Amen, thank God, it is true; I believe it." Then would you not write down, "Constant keeping from all evil, and the supply of every need?" The Bible is full of that blessed truth at every point; the keeping Christ, the providing Lord, the comforting Friend, the everlasting Portion of Gods people. Whatever you wish, there stands the living God, and says I AM. God must give; he cannot withhold; he would not be God any more than a fountain would be a fountain if he were not perpetually pouring out his fullness upon all the universe. Suppose that you say, "I want a future that is clear and full of provision for eternity." The Lord is our everlasting Portion; the great God is ever saying I AM, and what more can men require for the future? The past, and the present, and the future are all set before us in the living God as being completely and everlastingly provided for. And yet how many souls are satisfied in Christ, how many could say that they have found in him everything that their souls desire? Not many, I fear.

Now, beloved, I wish to convince you of God's everlasting supply for what ever you can need now and in eternity. It is exceedingly difficult to

express to the sons of men the marvelous intentions, and the marvelous provisions of God, and the marvelous possibilities that lie before them, if they could only apprehend what God is to the creature, and what the creature is meant to be to God.

Once more I turn to God's picture-book, the Old Testament, so graciously provided for us, that we may understand a little by God's dealings with his people Israel what he would do for spiritual Israel if we would fully trust him. Look at two or three verses in the Old Testament which speak of what God desires to be to his people, and to have his people to be to him.

First in Deuteronomy xxxii. 9, we read, "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." Notice that carefully for it implies that the Almighty wishes to find in his chosen people his own portion and satisfaction, his inheritance for his personal enjoyment. But that is not enough. Look at Deuteronomy x. 8, 9, and see what God intends to be to his people: "The Lord separated the tribe of Levi to bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister unto him, and to bless in his name, unto this day. Wherefore Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren; the Lord is his inheritance, according as the Lord thy God promised him."

When God separated the children of Israel

from other nations, if the whole people would have drawn nigh to Mount Sinai and had heard the revelation of God's will, then God had one great purpose for them all, *viz.*, that they should be to him "a kingdom of priests" (Ex. xix. 6). The people drew back, notwithstanding that they had been delivered out of Egyptian bondage, and brought nigh to God at Mount Sinai. God said, "I must now reveal myself to you in holiness, but in order to see the revelation of my holiness, you must put away everything connected with the flesh and idolatry." The people said, "The demand is too great," and they rejected the call of God to draw nigh to the mountain, and so could not be made a kingdom of priests unto God. Every soul in that nation was intended to take part in the priesthood, and to enjoy all its privileges: to draw nigh to God in his holy place, to speak to God concerning the people, to receive from God his grand revelations, to dwell in the presence of God, with the soul's desires provided for by God at every point, to be freed from all hard service and burden-bearing, never to know one shadow of care, one thought of a burden, or distress, but to rest in the Lord, to wait patiently for him, and to be assured that he would be not only their God, but their portion, their inheritance, their supply forever.

Look again at Numbers xviii. 2 and see more of what God is to his people. We considered

first the people, then the Levites, now Aaron. "Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them. I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel." The Lord's people is his portion; the people's portion was to be the Lord, but they refused it, so that God was compelled to take out of the people a little portion, one tribe. Why was the tribe of Levi chosen? Because when an hour of testing came, and the people were to be questioned as to their idolatry, into which they had fallen, when Moses was in the Mount, the one tribe of Levi stood out and consecrated themselves to the Lord, girded their swords upon their sides, and stepped forward to avenge the cause of God against their own parents, their own brethren and all the tribes of Israel, that they might deliver Israel from the curse of God brought upon them through idolatry. From that moment the Lord appointed the tribe of Levi to be his chosen tribe, his priesthood with constant, full fellowship with him. But alas, even the tribe of Levi neglected their privileges, and God had to take one family. Again and again God endeavored, first through the nation, then through the family of Levi to induce the people to draw nigh to him and take the privileges and powers of the priesthood. But no; 1500 years go by, and the nations are no better for God having delivered one nation; they

are still in darkness and degradation, though Israel had been delivered to be a light to lighten the Gentiles. Thus, when Jesus was born, there was no one people, no one tribe, apparently no one family that would glorify God by whole-hearted consecration, and so God must now choose one man. The man Christ Jesus is born into the world to be what Israel and Levi and Aaron refused to be; Christ becomes the man to glorify God his Father in all things before God and before the world. Then from the man Christ Jesus, there began from the day of pentecost to spread the riches of God's love to other men, who were taken possession of and drawn unto the man; one after another are drawn out of the darkness and degradation of sin into the comfort and the joy of resting in Christ. The moment that the church was constituted as a body of people who could be said to rest in Christ, God said to that church that he had taken them again to be a kingdom of priests" (Rev. i. 6; I. Pet. ii. 9).

What are the privileges of the priesthood now accorded to the church of Jesus Christ? If we Christians had our privileges, there is absolutely nothing for which we could ask God that we have not been already supplied with in Christ Jesus. Men may ask what then is the need of prayer? In one sense there is no need of prayer from the Christian; in another sense, there is

constant need of prayer. No need of prayer, because all things are yours if ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's own Son, drawing unceasingly from the riches of the Father and pouring them out upon us. But in another sense there is need of prayer at every moment of our existence, because our eyes are not opened to see what God has given to us of privileges and of possibilities. Moment by moment we should be living a life of prayer. We can only get the benefit of these riches as moment by moment we open our mouths wide, for the Lord to fill them. Look up and say, "Lord, open mine eyes that I may see the wondrous things out of thy law, and that I may have grace to take." I need not ask my God to provide anything further for me than he has provided in Christ, but I do need to ask God to teach me how to take, because I am so ignorant, and so helpless and so vile. I try to draw out a few benefits for myself upon earth, when all the riches of heaven are mine. "Whosoever will, let him take." How much? According to his need and his desire. God cannot give more; it is for us to take more.

But how can we learn the secret of a perpetual supply for perpetual need, which shall take us beyond the momentary requirements, and fill our souls with holy calm? The picture is given us in the priesthood of what God intended to be carried out first by the whole of Israel, then, as

they rejected it, by the tribe of Levi, then, as they understood it not, by the family of Aaron, and then, as they missed it, God now and then gives us glimpses of what might be, if we were but faithful. In these verses from II. Chronicles we have one little glimpse of what we may enjoy from this day forth and forever.

King Hezekiah was raised up as a reformer. He gave his heart to God in his youth, and the moment he obtained possession of the kingdom, he set his heart upon God. He is, in this sense, a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Anointed of God, who is put before the world to show what God can do for his people. The moment Hezekiah came to the throne he desired to deliver Israel from their dark degradation; and he proceeded to call around him those who could fill the house of God not only with beauty, but men who would worship God according to his will. The priests whom he first called upon cleansed the temple of the filth found in it, which they threw into the Brook Kedron. Next the King called upon the people to draw nigh and offer through the priests their holy sacrifices, the burnt offerings and the sin offerings, while the temple was being reconsecrated to the service of the Lord. But the priests were not as ready for this holy business as they should have been, and the Levites rose, and were more zealous to consecrate and sanctify themselves than the

priests, so that then and there the Lord appointed the Levites to the priesthood. The Levites were called to take their part in the holy work of the priesthood, offering the sacrifices for the people, drawing nigh to God, and receiving of him everything that the priests were meant to have—riches and honor and glory. Alas, they could not all take the glorious provision intended for them, because of their blindness and unbelief. What is that provision? "Unto everyone . . . his daily portion for his service . . . for they sanctified themselves in holiness."

Can you not now understand a little of what God has purposed to give you? He has called you to the priesthood, that is, to yield yourselves to him, and that you may draw nigh to him into the very Holy of Holies, by the new and living way, Christ Jesus. "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." Draw nigh to God! Your heart shrinks back and you say, "I love the Lord, but I cleave to money, I cleave to pleasure; I cannot come, God is too holy." Then down you go among the heathen, and there you tarry until you perish in the wilderness as did so many of Israel. They could not know what blessings God intended for his people.

The first thing demanded of everyone who would be one of God's priests, is to come right into the presence of the Holy One. The incense is being offered by our High Priest, who has

opened the way by tearing the veil from top to bottom. "By him we have access through one Spirit unto the Father." We may, therefore, go to God in perfect peace, notwithstanding his absolute holiness and our own unworthiness.

But the priesthood was not only appointed to come nigh to God but that, having this privilege they should bring blessing to the world around. This is our second privilege, to magnify God before our nation and the nations round about by showing them that the priesthood has the glorious privilege of going unto God and of revealing God to the people.

Moses is an illustration of this office in his holy communications with God in the Mount which all Israel might have enjoyed, when he came out with his face shining, though he wist it not. Thus God was glorified in the presence of the world in the only man that would take the glorious dignity of access to the dignity and majesty of God. Oh, beloved! take your privilege as those Levites did in the days of Hezekiah. Cleanse the temple when you have seen God; go out and show him to the people.

What is the immediate result? God starts those men in a life of abundant supply, of perfect satisfaction, of constant dependence upon him, but of perfect assurance that they shall

never lack anything that may be required in their office.

The unsearchable riches of Christ are at our command in every time of need, but are never to be laid up in store, hidden away in our own peculiar treasure-house. Day by day God's priesthood was commissioned to wait upon him at the altar, and as God touched the hearts of his people to bring sacrifices unto the altar, the priests should be abundantly supplied. That is what God is offering to you and to me. You may say to yourself, "It sounds well but it will never do for the wear and tear of daily life." It will, beloved; the supply of God is for everyday life. God says that this supply is not to be only the priests, but for "their little ones, their wives, and their sons, and their daughters," because a few came out from among their brethren, and said: "We sanctify ourselves in holiness this day unto the Lord" (II. Chron. xxxi. 18). You shall lack for nothing needful if you sanctify yourself in holiness and if you do it with a pure heart fervently, and not simply wishing to test God. One man said to me: "Let us try it, sir, in a few things." No, my brother, in every department of your being you must sanctify yourself in holiness; which means to give into God's hands everything you have with a desire that it shall be used for the glory of God from this day forth and forevermore. Then,

the Lord says: "Unto everyone that entereth the house of the Lord, his daily portion." You have been looking ahead and have been fretting about the education of your children, because you know not how the supply will come, how you can ever go through death, or face the sacrifice of this dear child to the mission field, and that one to death. Beloved, God never said look ahead, God said look up; God never said look around, he only said look into the holy of holies; God never said look down, he only said look into the face of the living God. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." As we look beyond to-day and say, "How can I expect that in the wear and tear of daily life, this holy peace is to be sustained?" the answer is, "Unto everyone that entereth into the house of the Lord, his *daily portion* for his service, according to his charges in his courses." God takes up every detail of life and says: "For thy charges," whatever you have in charge; "According to your courses;" you will have your turn. "In your office," wherever your work is, where you are, and where God wants you, there he undertakes to give you your daily supply.

But, beloved, God never can give a daily supply for the life that is in the temple of the Lord, until the temple of the Lord is there, and men have entered into it. It is a remarkable

fact with regard to those Levites, that at the outset of their career as a separate people, they knew none of this rest and daily supply. Israel was chosen first as a people, but they rejected it. Then God chooses a tribe, but the tribe was not fitted for the blessing, and though they were set apart for God's business as the priesthood, they could not have it because their hearts were not right with God. What became of them? The fourth chapter of the Book of Numbers tells how God appointed the tribe of Levi to a burdensome service. They had a second-class service instead of a first-class service, for their consecration at the time of the idolatry of Israel, they were admitted into something better than the people, but their service, after all, was one of burden-bearing. They were not wholly given to the Lord, and did not trust him as they should, and the people could not seek at their lips the word of wisdom and the word of power. That burden-bearing continued all through the journey in the wilderness, throughout their sojourn in Canaan, until Solomon arose as the Prince of Peace and built the temple of the Lord. When the temple of the Lord was completed, and was being consecrated to the Lord, the ark was taken into the temple, then the staves were pulled from its sides to show that the burden bearing of Levi was ended, and that the people might, like the priests, enter into the temple of

the Lord for rest (I. Kings viii. 8). Solomon built the temple of which the Lord said, "Here will I rest, and my people shall rest." Had they accepted their privilege, Levi would never again have known the burdensome service which so many Christians now experience.

Brethren, God is calling all his people, and if they refuse then he calls a tribe; if the tribe refuses, he calls a family; if the family refuses, he calls a man. Each one must answer for himself whether or not he will take the blessed privilege of the life of rest, and enter into the temple of the Lord, and look upon Christ Jesus, our Ark, with the mercy seat and the holy cherubim, and the law of God in his heart, and the manna to show the supply. "Here will I rest," saith the Lord; and we may answer back, "Here will I rest, O Lord, for I have a supply of every need."

God is closely linked to his people, if they will be linked to him, and as we go into the Holy of Holies to look into the face of God, as he shows his glory upon Christ Jesus, the Ark between the cherubim, God's voice comes out to us, and there is peace and calm and fellowship and communion; we are with God in the presence of Christ.

Brethren, what more do you want? Will you trust your Lord? I know that you will encounter in your daily life difficulties absolutely in-

superable by any human power, but you are called to pass through Jesus Christ into the presence of God, and are to come out no more.

Would it not be better to leave to-morrow alone? That is what is troubling men; to-morrow's temptations, to-morrow's difficulties, to-morrow's burdens, to-morrow's duties. Martin Luther in his Autobiography says, "I have one preacher that I love better than any other upon earth; it is my little tame robin which preaches to me daily. I put his crumbs upon my window-sill, especially at night. He hops on to the sill, when he wants his supply, and takes as much as he desires to satisfy his need. From thence he always hops on to a little tree close by, and lifts up his voice to God, and sings his carol of praise and gratitude, tucks his little head under his wing, and goes fast asleep, and leaves to-morrow to look after itself. He is the best preacher that I have on earth."

Brethren, the best preaching that we can give each other in this world is to say, trust in the Lord, wait on the Lord, fret not thyself in any wise to do evil, with a calm assurance for to-day that to be poor is best. As a poor, beggarly priest, without any inheritance, property or riches, hang on God. The Saviour, our High Priest, himself taught us to say, "Our Father, which art in Heaven . . . give us this day our daily bread." Our daily portion for body, soul, and spirit.

Leave to-morrow with Jesus, for he knows how to steal the bitter from life's woes; he knows what his priests require, and all that he has ever said to us is, "*Now* is the day of salvation; to-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Israel could not enter in because of unbelief. Let us, therefore, knowing that the promise is given to us of entering into his rest, see to it that none of us should come short in any wise of the unspeakable blessing that is offered to us of going unto God for holy communion, coming out from God to be a blessing to the people, and waiting upon God every moment of our lives for every supply that our souls could desire, because he says, "Ask, and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you."

How can you say no to such a God, who is able and willing to give all that we can ask or think, all through his blessed Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who has been appointed of God for one purpose, to save to the very uttermost all that come unto God by him. I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them which are sanctified unto holiness through faith, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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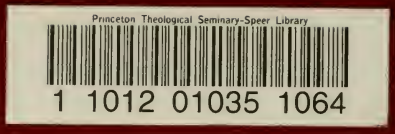
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